

# COALITION

*Issue 67*

*Canadians Step Back as  
Afghani Move Forward*



*Signs of Progress  
in Central Helmand*



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**Cover Pages**

Front Cover: Afghan Soldiers during a visit to the village of Kwajangur in Afghanistan's Kherwar district. (Combined Joint Task Force - 82 PAO Photo by Pfc. Michael Sword)

Back Cover: U.S. Navy Lt. Jessica Gandy gives a stuffed kangaroo to cheer up an Afghan girl in the Indira Ghandi Children's Hospital Burn Ward, Kabul, Afghanistan. Photo by Navy Mass Communications Specialist Petty Officer 1st Class (AW) Monica R. Nelson

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# EDITORIAL



In this issue we have several articles that reflect the progressive improvements made in the Afghanistan National Army. There are several stories that speak of the development of the capacity of Afghan Security Forces in providing security and hope to the Afghan people.

There is an article about Afghan National Army soldier helping to rid Northern Afghanistan of improvised explosive devices (IEDS) and mines. The 209th Corps Route Clearing Company has recently completed a 10-days mission in Kunduz Province, Northern Afghanistan's most active area of enemy activities.

Another article highlights the signs of progress in Central Helmand, as a result of Operation Moshtarak, an Afghan led initiative to assert government authority in that province. One of the most visible signs is the re-opening of the local markets. Many of those had been closed for years, especially during the time of Taliban rule.

The Operation SHER II and the First Mentoring Task Forces articles illustrates, how the Afghan soldiers continue to make steady progress while undertaking population protection in Oruzgan province and the villages of Khenjakak and Adamzai in central Panjwayi district.

We also highlighted the increase in troop contribution, in both ORF and ISAF mission by the Mongolian Government. As an indication of their commitment to support the region stabilization, they sent an Expeditionary Task force to perform fixed site security at Camp Eggers in Kabul and at Feyzabad. They are also sending an Artillery mobile training team to the Kabul Military training center.

We also have an article from Brigadier General Matos de la Cruz, a member of the first Dominican Republic contingent that arrived to Iraq. He explained, how under the operational command of the Multinational Brigade Plus Ultra of Spain (BCT3), the Dominican troops carried out Stabilization and Support operation (SASO) in various areas of Iraq.

To finalize I want to bring to the attention of the readers to the Face book page created by the Coalition Public Affairs Team to better keep inform our members and the population in general about the activities related to the Coalition and CENTCOM.

Col José D. Arias  
Dominican Republic  
Chief of Coalition Public Affairs Team

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## ISAF Forces Help Provide Medical Care for Afghan Villagers

British military personnel, alongside other ISAF troops, have recently treated several Afghan nationals at the most successful village medical outreach event held to date for the local community near Camp Bastion in Helmand Province.

The visit was led by U.S. Marines the 3rd Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion, United States Marine Corps (USMC), but also comprised Royal Armed Forces Police and RAF Regiment personnel and elements of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Danish medical personnel.



Members of 1 Squadron RAF Regiment, normally based at RAF Honington, provided the inner security cordon for the event whilst the United States Marine Corps provided the outer cordon.

The ANA also provided a medic and search capability under the mentorship of the Danish Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team.

[www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)

## Afghan National Army recruits graduate from Joint Security Academy (SW) in Helmand

The Commander of 215 Corps of the Afghan National Army (ANA) General Malouk was Guest of Honour at the ceremony which saw 100 recruits graduate from the Joint Security Academy South West (JSAS) at Camp Leatherneck in Helmand.

The course is run by the US Marine Corps Expeditionary Force and is based on a successful training programme run by the Marines in Iraq. The Academy takes recruits who have volunteered



to train with the Marines and turns them into ANA Warriors (the name given to ANA privates).

The Academy aims to train up to 1,200 high quality Warriors and uniformed Policemen at a time. The eight week course covers subjects which include ethics, the Afghan constitution and infantry skills.

[www.nato.int/isaf](http://www.nato.int/isaf)

# Dominican Republic Armed Forces' Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

*By Brigadier General Matos de la Cruz Dominican Republic*

Dominican Republic (DR) was one of the first countries to arrive in Iraq in order to participate in the Operation Enduring Freedom. From August 2003 to May 2004, DR dispatched a total of 604 men in two contingents of battalion level, each carrying 302 men. Under the operational command of the Multinational Brigade Plus Ultra of Spain (BCT3), the DR troops supported the Coalition forces by carrying out stabilization and support operations (SASO) in various areas of Iraq.

When the DR troops replaced the United States 3rd Navy infantry battalion, the Task Force Quisqueya 7, assumed its responsibilities of the restituting of the financial system of the area and re-establishing the operation of the State machinery in Ad-Diwaniyah, a province of Al-Quadisiyah, 200 miles south of Bagdad. The main challenge for the Forces was to ensure the smooth monetary flow of the funds to the concerned segments of the society so as to preserve transparency and ensure peace in the volatile areas of Iraq.

To address the challenge of restoring peace and normality in the area, priority was given to 'Operation Frago Dinnar'. Within the operational paradigm, priority was accorded in providing security to the province's Main Bank, protection to the transportation of goods, security during the disbursement of payment to the employees of Coalition Provisional Authorities (CPA) and to the Pensioners.

In the particular case of the security of the bank, located in heart of the area, the operation was executed by providing protection to the personnel within the facilities of the monetary institution, by ensuring strict security measures, where several

DR troops were deployed to physically control the entry and exit of men and material plying in and out of the area.

For safe and secured transportation of money from the bank to Provisional Payment posts, a mobile section size reaction team was also created. This team had an arduous task of shuttling between the base, Camp Santo Domingo, for escorting the financial authorities from and to the bank vis-a-vis ensuring the safe transition of the money to and from various locations within the area of responsibility.



While performing their difficult and challenging tasks, DR troops exhibited greater resolve and determination in maintaining order and discipline. Throughout the day duty hours, the troops would remain on sharp vigil to thwart any sniper activity, ensure the safety of the bank staff and physically guard the parameters of the base.

Besides the challenging operational environment in the theater of operations, DR troops have been performing their tasks in a befitting manner, shoulder to shoulder, working in harmony with the other multinational forces that are part of the Coalition and have the unified objective of fighting the menace of terrorism in its entirety..

The warning welcoming of other Latin American countries in the ongoing 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan is reflective of the fact that the United States really appreciates the way how those countries performed the tasks assigned to them in Iraq.



# Hungarians Join NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan

*Story by Petty Officer 2nd  
Class David R. Quillen*

Hungarians air and ground crew trainers from the Home Defense Force, 86th "Szolnok" Helicopter Base have landed to add extra trainers to the growing Afghan national army air corps helicopter crews at Kabul.

NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan works shoulder to shoulder with the Afghan national army air corps. In 2007 the Combined Air Power Transition Force was created bringing together several nations to provide a foundation for the ANAAC. Partnering nations include the United States, Canada, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and now Hungary.

"We have come to Afghanistan as instructors to train the Afghans in the proper use of the Mi-24, as both air and ground crew. We use the same craft back home, so it was a natural transition for us to come here to teach" said Maj. Bela Lazar of the Hungarian home defense force.

The Afghan air corps uses the NATO named Mi-35 or "Hind E" attack helicopter, which is the same design as the Mi-24. The Hungarians have agreed to a provisional year long tour, with three teams of ten instructors cycling through in four month rotations. The Hungarians will capitalize on the lessons learned from both their American and Czech counterparts and have designed training accordingly.

"We have been training for many months, a year even on those lessons learned by other nations that use the Mi-24 and how they work here [in Afghanistan]," Lazar said.

The enthusiasm is apparent when Lazar talks about the experience of being in Afghanistan as this will be the 86th Helicopter Regiment's first mission outside Hungary and the team has high expectations. Lazar has seven years of instruction experience and the rest of the team is equally experienced.



The ten members of the new Hungarian training detachment of the Combined Air Power Transition Force, Stand before an Mi-35 attack helicopter on the Afghan national army air corps base in Kabul, Afghanistan, May 1. The Hungarians are on loan from the Home Defense Force, 86 Helicopter Regiment, Szolnok Helicopter Base and is the first mission for the regiment outside of Hungary.

# First Mentoring Task Force Troops on the Frontline in Afghanistan

Story and Photos Courtesy of:  
[www.defence.gov.au](http://www.defence.gov.au)

Brisbane-based soldiers from the 1st Mentoring Task Force (MTF-1) soldiers continue to make steady progress while undertaking population protection operations in Oruzgan Province.

In the first days of May, MTF-1 soldiers and their Afghan National Army counterparts have found fifteen insurgent weapons and ammunition caches, as well as two improvised explosive devices, in the Mirabad Valley, Baluchi Valley and Chora regions.

The caches and improvised explosive devices were found inside houses, in fields and other areas frequented by the local people as well as Australian, ISAF and Afghan National Security Force personnel.

Commanding Officer of MTF-1, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Blain said his soldiers conduct security operations around the clock across the MTF-1 area of operations in dangerous and challenging conditions.

"Our people work in partnership with Afghan National Army soldiers and patrol the streets, fields, deserts and villages on operations day in and day out," Lieutenant Colonel Blain said.



Members of an Afghan National Army patrol, along with their Australian Mentor, crouch alongside a large display of weapons and ammunition found in a hidden cache by their patrol.

"The reality is that there is no frontline in Afghanistan. Even the Multinational Base in Tarin Kowt comes under insurgent rocket attack from time to time: we're constantly fighting against insurgents who try to blend into the village environment so they can control the people through fear, whilst simultaneously conducting indiscriminate, violent attacks."

Combined, the caches found during the past week contained one 107mm rocket, eight rocket propelled grenades, one rocket propelled grenade launcher, thousands of rounds of ammunition for AK47 Assault Rifles and small quantities of other small arms and machine gun ammunition, two hand grenades, two heavy machine gun tripods, four high explosive mortar rounds and seven sets of chest webbing used by insurgents.

"Our troops search houses and other buildings used by the Taliban to hide caches, build bombs and launch attacks," Lieutenant Colonel Blain said.

"Our soldiers' partner and mentor Afghan troops on these operations and they are having a real impact on Taliban freedom of movement."

Last week's finds are in addition to more than 200 weapons caches and IEDs already discovered and destroyed this year in Oruzgan Province.



Two Afghan National Army soldiers search a haystack for a hidden cache of weapons, explosives, or ammunition.

# Afghan Army

## Unit Removes IEDs On Its Own

By USAF Master Sgt. Christopher DeWitt  
[www.isaf.nato.int](http://www.isaf.nato.int)

PUZA-I-ESAN, Afghanistan (May 2010) - Afghan National Army soldiers are now helping to rid northern Afghanistan of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and mines. Soldiers from Camp Shaheen's 209th Corps Route Clearing Company (RCC) recently completed certification under the training and direction of U.S. soldiers and have begun conducting autonomous missions in Northern provinces.



IED Explosion

The RCC team recently completed a 10-day mission in Kunduz Province, northern Afghanistan's most active area of enemy activity, resulting in the successful identification and removal of 17 IEDs and mines.

"We are making the area safe," said Capt. Mohammad Ali Yazdani, 209th RCC commander. "We successfully found many IEDs and all of our team did amazing."

Hoping to build on their initial success, the team immediately continued into another mission in the Baghlan province, another area in the north where insurgents are becoming more active.

"Over the past 21 days we've found 40 IEDs and mines in Baghlan," Yazdani said. "The roads are now safe for the people and Afghan and coalition soldiers."

One member of the Afghan 4th Kandak 1st Brigade Explosive Ordinance Disposal Platoon was extremely excited about his involvement in the successful mission.

"I'm very happy because I can now help others," said Staff Sgt. Gholam Mohammad, EOD platoon team member. "Our mission is very important because we keep ANA, coalition forces, and the people of the local villages safe. We are together in this mission; we have one target and one mission."

Joining the ANA during their mission, 10th Mountain 1st Brigade Special Troop Battalion 2nd Platoon Alpha Company engineers continued the mentoring process.

"You couldn't hope for a better RCC team," said 1st Lt. John Marhevsky, Alpha Company platoon

leader. "They have successfully completed three missions on their own, two of which have been without any casualties and have found numerous IEDs."

Marhevsky said his team was excited to work with the ANA and see how they utilized the training received from the previous mentoring team, adding, "We can't build a good working relationship without going out on

missions together."

"We were very glad to see [10th Mountain] join with us, and we look forward to working together with them," Yazdani said concerning U.S. and Afghan teams working together for the remainder of their mission.

The 209th Corps RCC's newfound capabilities have provided local and coalition forces with a safer environment, as well as, the much-needed security for those that inhabit the Baghlan province.

"We've opened roads for civilians and cleared IEDs for construction workers who are now able to continue their work," Yazdani said of the accomplishments his team had made in the area.

When not searching for IEDs, Alpha Company soldiers filled their time by instructing the ANA on vehicle maintenance, battle drills, and combat life saving techniques to increase their self-sustainability when on mission.

"We want to teach them things they don't know, as well as learn their capabilities and previous training, it's like a two way street," said Sgt. 1st Class James Williams, Alpha Company platoon sergeant. "It helps build confidence between the two groups.



An Afghan Soldier from the 209th Corps Route Clearance Company checks for suspicious items in a public park after being tipped off to a possible improvised explosive device.

(Photo by Master Sgt. Christopher DeWitt, USAF)

# Operation SHER II: Canadians Step Back as Afghans Move Forward

By Captain Lena Angell  
[www.cefcom.forces.gc.ca](http://www.cefcom.forces.gc.ca)

The sun was still behind the jagged mountains as Afghan and Canadian soldiers boarded the CH-147 Chinook helicopters for Operation SHER II, an air-mobile operation led by Lieutenant-Colonel Sakhi Barriz of Kandak 2 of the 1st Brigade, 205 Corps Afghan National Army. His task force comprised about 140 Afghan soldiers from Kandak 2, a 20-man detachment from the Afghan Uniformed Police, and 80 soldiers of the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (1 PPCLI) Battle Group.

Beginning on 26 March 2010, Op SHER II was conducted in an area measuring 10 km north to south and 7 km from east



LtCol Sakhi Barriz, commanding officer of Kandak 2 of the 1/205 Corps ANA, points out where the axis of advance was during Operation SHER II.

to west, enclosing the villages of Khenjakak and Adamzai in central Panjwayi District, about 21 km southwest of Kandahar City. Over several days, the Afghan soldiers and police searched one compound after another and talked with the residents. The Canadians kept their distance, standing by to provide assistance if required.

“The target area has traditionally been the heart of the forward operating zone of the insurgency complete with command, control and logistic nodes to include IED production factories. Taking control of the area now is of critical importance because in doing so it prohibits the insurgents from re-grouping for the summer — the typical fighting season,” said LCol Barriz.

Preparations for Op SHER II began weeks earlier, with LCol Barriz and his staff directing the planning.

“This is LCol Barriz’s country, his battle space, and the Canadian Forces are here to support. Kandak 2 is the furthest advanced battalion in Afghanistan. Having the ANA take the lead was a significant milestone, demonstrating their confidence and capability,” said LCol Jerry Walsh, commanding officer of the 1 PPCLI Battle Group.

Since the beginning of Roto 8 last September, LCol Walsh and his battle group have followed ISAF commander General Stanley McChrystal’s directive to focus on partnered operations, providing security for the Afghan people by living among them in patrol bases located in or close to population centres. Rather than chasing the Taliban from forward operating bases, Canadian soldiers now operate very closely with the Afghan national security forces among the locals.

“The reason for this operation, for all of our operations, centres on the population. Seventy percent of the population in the Panjwayi area lives within 21 kilometers of Kandahar City, in the area where we launched the operation,” said LCol Walsh. “This is the last insurgent stronghold before western Panjwayi, before you get into some of the areas that will be targeted for Operation MOSHTARAK III, the coalition forces’ much-anticipated summer offensive in Kandahar Province.”

LCol Walsh went on to discuss the aims of Op SHER II. “[It] is the foundation in support of the population, the governance and security that will set the conditions for future operations to the west. It’s the springboard. It’s absolutely essential. The effect that this operation will have is to push the insurgents further to the west — those who will not fight — and separate them from the population.”

The value of Operation SHER II (“sher” means “lion”) is not just military; more importantly, it is a concrete example of the Afghan national security forces’ ability to provide hope for their own people, explained LCol Barriz, adding that the ANA is making progress in improving the security situation. The Afghan commander noted numerous projects with tangible results: an unprecedented women’s shura in Bazaar-e-Panjwayi, the re-opening of a school serving more than 500 children, and a ground-breaking to mark the beginning of a project to build a road that will employ local labour and provide southern Afghanistan with a key social and economic link.

Echoing LCol Barriz’s comments, LCol Walsh remarked on the effectiveness of the partnered approach to operations, made possible by the influx of additional American troops that reduced the Canadian area of operations and allowed Canadian soldiers to work with their Afghan partners in the villages.

“The new approach calls for partnering at every level from commanders all the way down to the lowest private,” said LCol Barriz, adding that soldiers live and fight side by side among the people, which is what is needed to defeat the insurgency.

It wasn’t easy to gain the people’s trust. LCol Walsh explained that it took a long time to get the locals in Nakhonay, a village of approximately 3,000 at the northern edge of the Adamzai chain, to start talking — especially about IEDs — to the Afghan soldiers and police, and to the Canadian troops.

In November 2009, Nakhonay and nearby Haji Baba were the scene of Operation HYDRA, a major partnered operation in which the 1 PPCLI Battle Group and the Afghan forces moved into the area. The two armies had to invest three months of visible presence and persistent patrolling before the villagers felt secure enough to start cooperating with the two armies.

“The locals now have some confidence and faith, and it’s



Afghan soldiers and the district governor distribute gifts of staple foods and household goods to more than 300 village families.

not in ISAF,” said LCol Walsh. “This is the other big piece: it’s all about the ANA, the police, the governor. We have very much stepped back and embraced that role of supporting what it is they do.”

Operation HYDRA and Operation SHER II involved forces of similar strength, but a small difference indicates a huge step forward for the Afghans. The forces deployed on Op HYDRA were commanded by LCol Walsh. Only four months later, LCol Barriz commanded the forces deployed on Op SHER II. In his early forties, LCol Barriz has risen rapidly in rank and has been fighting the Taliban in this area for eight years.

For the insurgency, the loss of Nakhonay over the winter was significant because the village was the last population centre they dominated in the Adamzai area. The insurgents now must withdraw to western Panjwayi, well away from Kandahar City.

“By controlling the Adamzai chain and Nakhonay and denying the insurgents the freedom of movement on the main routes, you sever the link,” said LCol Walsh. “The objective is not the effect that we have on the insurgents; rather, it’s the population. We’re looking for the population to reject the insurgency. We’re looking for the population to see in the ANA and ANP having the ability to protect them.”

Operation SHER II progressed on schedule, and two suspected IEDs were found after four days of methodical clearance and searches. Residents of the area reported that the insurgents had already left the area. “The fact that the insurgents fled was not a surprise,” said LCol Walsh. “Our focus is on the population. Now we can work together for a better future for the people of Afghanistan.”

On the fourth day of Op SHER II, gifts of staple foods and household goods such as cookware were distributed, and a shura was called, with the prominent district governor Haji Baran to lead the discussions. “Every shura, every meeting — it’s not just after every operation — we take Haji with us. Haji is very good at promoting representative government,” said LCol Walsh, adding that governance and development play a huge role in military operations. “You go into an operation,



Afghan and Canadian soldiers board CH-147 Chinook helicopters at the end of Operation SHER II.

you clear it, you hold it, but what must come along with you at every stage is the governance piece, the reconstruction and development. That has been a big part of our approach.”

The governance, reconstruction and development piece is integral to promoting stability after a military operation takes place, and progress on these fronts is happening in Panjwayi.

“For the first time, Governor of Kandahar Tooryalai Wesa is calling in his district governors roughly every three weeks to talk about the needs of the people. The Minister of Education in January played a key role in the opening of that Bazaar-e-Panjwayi school, and is integral now in promoting education in the district. This has not been happening for years,” said LCol. Walsh.

The coordination of the military security efforts to match government priorities and development that targets addressing specific grievances is done at the grassroots level through District Operational Coordination Centres.

“It’s happening in a coherent fashion. We opened a District Centre in Panjwayi in January — it’s a hub, it’s a meeting point, a coordination center — and there’s now a plan where the district governor sits at the head of the table with LCol Barriz representing security from the military perspective, the District Chief of Police representing the police along with the National Defence Secretariat,” said LCol Walsh.

The U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. State Department, which assists the district governor in developing his capacity, also sit at the table, and all elements discuss the district priorities such as education, health and roads.

District Operational Coordination Centres have also been established in nearby Dand, Zhari and Arghandab districts.

# Mongolia Expands Troop Contribution to Afghanistan

Story by LTC Isheekhuu Batbold

In the last December Mongolia expanded its troop contribution to Afghanistan in both OEF and ISAF mission by sending Expeditionary Task force which is consisted of an infantry company performing fixed site security at Camp Eggers in Kabul, and artillery mobile training team at Kabul Military Training Center and an Infantry Detachment performing fixed site security at Feyzabad, Northern Afghanistan.

The commitment of the Mongolian government to support the global war on terrorism and regional stabilization has been demonstrated over years with deployments to Africa, Southwest Asia, Kosovo and numerous individual United Nations observer missions to Georgia and Africa.

The Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) served for five distinguished years in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) performing fixed site security at several bases rotating over 1,200 soldiers through Iraq and since 2003-2008 and participated

in Afghan National Army development program with their professionalism and expertise on artillery and mortar systems, sending more than 280 trainers who trained and assisted to prepare over 1500 Afghan professional artillery personnel. They are expanding their scope and offerings based on ANA requests to train more soldiers and are planning to offer their expertise to more units in the Regional Command Capital area. Mongolian artillery mobile training team has partnered

*Their country and families are proud of their service and continue to support them as they serve abroad*

with coalition and Afghan trainers to provide a better training and mentor activity for Afghan soldiers. They are participating to reform the training curriculum for the Afghan Military College with Australian and British mentor groups.

OIF and other deployments have helped to establish a tradition of service and an experienced force with 80 percent of the currently deployed soldiers in country having served in other theaters. Mongolian national senior representative,



U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates during his visit at camp Eggers in Kabul

commander of the Expeditionary Task Force LTC Dondogorj Javkhlanbayar, “we are working with United States, coalition forces and civilian security companies. It has been a great experience and opportunity for our soldiers to work with such a diverse group of people”.

On 8 March 2010, during visit to the camp Eggers in Kabul, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates made short stop at Mongolian Task Force soldiers to show his respect and appreciation for their contribution to the Operation Enduring Freedom.

Since 2005, eventhough Mongolia is a North East Asian country, it has developed a successful cooperation with NATO contributing its troops to the NATO missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan, which was important not only for Mongolia to share an experiences and to improve the professional military skills for conducting multinational operations, but also for NATO to improve bilateral cooperation non member states. Currently, Mongolia also has a bilateral agreement with Germany and is currently providing fixed site security at Feyzabad Contingent in the Regional Command North.

The platoon sized element commanded by Captain Ser-od Boldbaatar has a diverse group of soldiers many of which have attended German military training and are fluent speakers. The platoon is responsible for base and airfield security at Feyzabad which is a remote base camp in northern Afghanistan.

On 29 March, NATO recognizes Mongolia as Potential troop contributing country to NATO during visit of the Mongolian Minister of Defense to NATO HQ in Brussels.

In first half of April, Minister of Defense of Mongolia, L. Bold visited the ISAF AOR in Afghanistan and made the official statement on expanding Mongolian troop contribution to the ISAF mission during his meeting with commander of ISAF and USA forces General Stanley A. McChrystal.

Therefore, Mongolians are going to cooperate with NATO members in ISAF missions by expanding its troop contribution in the future on bilateral bases.

The Mongolian Armed Forces have distinguished themselves in every theater they have served and are continuing to develop their capacity to take on more roles and responsibility each time they deploy.



# Pakistan Army Conducts Major Field Exercise 'Azm-e-Nau-3' (New Resolve)

*Story by: Maj Ghazanfar Iqbal  
Community Relations Officer*

Pakistan Army conducted a major Field Exercise, titled Azm-e-Nau-3, scheduled from 10 April to 13 May 2010. The Army Field Exercise was the biggest military exercise after Zarb e Momin of 1989. The field exercise involved troops participating from all arms and services including Pakistan Air Force. The exercise was a culmination of a long and deliberate process of war games, discussions and logistic evolution of the Concept of Warfare that is fully responsive to a wide menu of emerging threats. The exercise was a concept validation stage of the operational thought process manifested in the form of tactical, operational and organizational aspects which would be validated and refined through the lessons learnt. The process commenced with Army War Games named Exercise Azm-e-Nau-2, conducted in February 2010.

It is prudent to note that Pakistan Army follows biennial training system, wherein, training objectives set forth are to be achieved over a span of two years. The training remains mission oriented based on the obtaining security environment. The training is methodical and progressive, culminating into Map Exercise / War games / field exercises at various levels

of command. In the light of vision of Chief of Army Staff a comprehensive training package in the form of "Year of Training" in 2009-2010 was planned and later Pakistan Army was set to go in the field to validate those concepts which were formulated during the "Year of Training".

A special feature of this exercise was harvesting the technological achievements, advancement in intelligence gathering, surveillance, reconnaissance and communication means that have revolutionized warfare. These were optimally leveraged in the forth coming exercise. These capabilities were expected to act as force multipliers by reducing the fog of war for own troops, obviating enemy surprise and reducing own reaction time. All available surveillance and reconnaissance assets were practiced / utilized in the exercise to validate their efficacy. PAF Exercise "High Mark 2010" was fully integrated with Army Field Exercise.

Comprehensive military exercises Azm-e-Nau-3 started with the exercise of 'Dispersal Techniques' by the troops in 'battle-like' situation. The exercise continued till May 15, where more than 20,000 soldiers from all arms and services



The Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani along with Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Rao Qamar Suleman witnessing armour maneuvers during exercise Azm-e-Nau-3.

including Pakistan Air Force actively participated in the grand exercise.

The first phase of military exercise Azm-e-Nau - III culminated with an Impressive Integrated Fire Power Exercise at Khairpur Tamewali, Bahawalpur. Prime Minister of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Federal Ministers, Parliamentarians, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Tariq Majid, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Services Chiefs, Foreign Defence Attaches and a number of retired and serving military officers witnessed the spectacular fire power exercise.

While explaining the concept of exercise, the COAS said that Exercise Azm-e-Nau - III was conceived and executed as a concept validation exercise; a part of the 'eternal preparedness' philosophy of Pakistan Army. He said that the exercise has helped in evolving a timely and effective response to emerging challenges.

While talking on the occasion Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani congratulated Pakistan Army for holding exercise Azm-e-Nau – III and commended the professionalism displayed. He also admired the success achieved in counter terrorism operations and acknowledged the sacrifices made by the Army and other Law Enforcement Agencies. The audience witnessed the integrated firing of various ground weapons, cobra gunship helicopters and Pakistan Air Force fighter aircrafts.

The Field Exercise Azm-e-Nau 3 culminated near Sialkot. The exercise marked the end of "Year of Training", wherein



Pakistan Army Troops are carrying out dispersal during exercise Azm-e-Nau-3.

intensive training was conducted across the full spectrum of military capabilities. The hall mark of the training process was the focus on concept formulation and validation. The Exercise Azm-e-Nau 3 was distinctly different from earlier exercises, wherein through a modular approach concept, validation of tactical, operational and organizational aspects was executed.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Army is rapidly transforming it self to be able to thwart all possible threats while operating in network enabled environment. Sufficient benchmarks have already been achieved and the manifestation of this capability has been projected in the Exercise Azm-e-Nau 3, in the given realm the field commanders up to the lowest tiers have transparency of the battlefield through a meaningful employment of all assets. All the parameters and standards set for the exercise were successfully achieved.



A view of integrated night fire power demonstration held in the exercise area.

# Signs of Progress in Central Helmand

Story and Photos Courtesy of:  
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KABUL, Afghanistan (May 19) - Three months after the launch of Operation Moshtarak, clear signs of progress are evident throughout central Helmand. "There are many positive indicators, especially in the areas of development and economic growth," said Maj. Gen. Nick Carter, Regional Command-South commander. "We have roads being built, district centers being reconstructed, and a lot of minor infrastructure projects underway."

## Governance and Education

Freedom of movement is key to delivering governance - in the form of traditional shuras as well as in health services, education and the judiciary. Since the first day of the operation, shuras called by provincial and district leaders have brought local elders together with government and combined force

new members for the district community council. More than 600 elders elected 45 members to represent the district and said they were happy with the district's new representation.

Governance is taking root throughout the region. A growing number of key government positions are being filled in the districts of Marjah and Nad-e Ali. Additional administrative offices are being built and enhanced services are being offered to residents, including new health care clinics and schools.

Improvements in education have been seen in central Helmand with the opening of new schools and the hiring of new teachers. The first schools, held under tents or in the open air, were established within a week of the commencement of Operation Moshtarak. There are now 13 schools in Nad-e Ali and nine in Marjah with 150 government-licensed teachers providing instruction to an estimated 3,100 students. Approximately 425 of these students are girls.



An Afghan National Army colonel talks to village elders and residents during a meeting held at India Company's position in Marjah, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 26, 2010. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Michael J. Ayotte)

## Economic Growth

One of the most visible signs of economic growth is the re-opening of local markets. Many of them had been closed for years, especially during the time of Taliban rule. More than 20 markets are now open for business, attracting more vendors and shoppers than due to increased security, better freedom of movement and higher quality of goods. Nearly \$400,000 has been spent refurbishing bazaars in Nad-e Ali and Marjah. There is a \$1 million project getting underway to rehabilitate the Loy Chareh Bazaar, which will employ more than 100 laborers and benefit thousands of local and regional Afghans by improving the variety and amount of goods traded within the southeast Marjah area.

representatives to provide participants opportunities to raise concerns and discuss local matters.

Election shuras were held in Chah Anjir, the Nad-e Ali district center and the Bolan "T" junction between April 26 and 28. Attendance at the shuras was approximately 1,200, 400 and more than 1,200, respectively, indicating local nationals felt secure enough to begin to engage with their government in large numbers. Nearly 500 squatters from the Bolan "T" turned out to ensure they are represented.

An election shura was held in Nad-e Ali, May 11, to choose

seeing stability and prosperity begin to flourish in central Helmand and what you see is a consumer culture beginning to happen," said Carter.

Programs such as the Governor's Food Zone Program, Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture (AVIPA) and the Marjah Accelerated Agricultural Transition Program (MAAT-P) help Helmand farmers move from growing poppy to cultivating legal crops. Without these alternatives, farmers find it difficult, if not impossible, to make this important change. At the end of the first week of May,

the economic stimulus phase of MAAT-P came to a close, and 7,000 hectares of farm land were registered and verified, representing nearly half of the farmland the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated could be used for poppy.

The provincial government's seed distribution program has proven extremely successful. Seeds have been provided to 20,000 farmers in the area, most of whom were previously



Two men measure out grain to sell at the Koru Chareh Bazaar in Marjah, Afghanistan. (Photo by Lance Cpl. James W. Clark)

dependent on poppy cultivation for their livelihood. These programs have created the required combination of farm preparation and inputs for the next season that gives the farmer a chance to break the cycle of poppy.

"Cash-for-work" programs are employing approximately 4,000 local residents per day, and nearly 80,000 "man-labor" days have been paid out for initiatives. Road construction and irrigation improvements, in particular, will enable farmers to get their products to market and help the Helmand valley reclaim its title as the "breadbasket of Afghanistan."

### Security and Freedom of Movement

Despite notable successes in development and economic growth, there are still challenges to be faced in the region. Insurgents continue to be active in the area, particularly in Marjah, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) remains



Photo of an Afghan Soldier during Operation Moshtarak, an Afghan - led Initiative to assert government authority in the centre of Helmand province. (ISAF Public Affairs Photo)

a lethal threat to local residents, government officials and combined forces.

Fortunately, the number of IED strikes in central Helmand is declining, while the number of IED finds is rising. This positive trend is attributed to effective partnering of combined forces and the growing number of local residents volunteering information to combined forces about the location of IEDs.

While the decrease in IED strikes is a positive development, it has been accompanied by a troubling spike in small-arms engagements in Marjah. Using hit-and-run tactics that endanger both civilians and combined forces, insurgents have mounted an aggressive intimidation campaign.

"We have been in large parts of Nad-e Ali for at least 15 months at the point at which we launched the Operation Moshtarak," said Carter, "so the project is at least a year further on than Marjah. The point is that by being a year further on and by adopting the approach and the amount of resources that have been applied to it, one will see what will happen in Marjah in due course."

Freedom of movement in central Helmand continues to improve. A recent analysis revealed a dramatic increase in vehicle movements along the main traffic artery, Route 608, which runs from Nad-e Ali down through Marjah. Weekly vehicle flow numbers for local residents travelling this road increased by 440 percent between March 20 and May 8. The latest reports show nearly 40,000 vehicle trips along Route 608 in a one-week period. This is a very encouraging sign that people are more confident in the security situation.

"There is still work to be done in both Marjah and Nad-e Ali," said Carter. "But the trends are positive, and my bet is we're in a good place in terms of the resources available on the ground and in the way in which the campaign is progressing."

Operation Moshtarak is an Afghan-led initiative to assert government authority in the center of Helmand province. Afghan and ISAF partners are engaging in this counter-insurgency operation at the request of the GIORA and the Helmand provincial government.



U.S. Navy Lt. Jessica Gandy gives a stuffed kangaroo to cheer up an Afghan girl in the Indra Ghandi Children's Hospital Burn Ward, Kabul, Afghanistan. The hospital receives \$400 a month to run the entire place, and the children's burn ward is a regular recipient of international aid brought in by ISAF volunteers. Lt. Gandy is a public affairs officer for ISAF. ISAF Photo by Navy Mass Communications Specialist Petty Officer 1st Class (AW) Monica R. Nelson