



*Spc. Jason Parham (left) and Spc. Shanita Young, 1015th Maintenance Co., repair an engine on a HMMV. The 1015th Maintenance Co. is the direct support maintenance unit for K2 and Afghanistan. The unit provides all the heavy maintenance repairs for Camp Stronghold Freedom.*

## Maintenance units help maintain K2's readiness

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson  
4<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**KARSHI-KHANABAD**, Uzbekistan – If U.S. and coalition forces in the combined joint operations area are to be successful in their quest to promote diplomacy in this region everyone must do his part – for a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Soldiers of Camp Stronghold Freedom's Logistics Task Force 406<sup>th</sup> Battalion, a Reserve unit from Ann Arbor, MI., and 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company, a Reserve unit Fort Gilliam, Ga., are determined not to be that weak link. Matter-of-factly, if that link should break they're probably the group who will repair or replace it.

"Our mission is to support all the units on Camp Stronghold Freedom with general service, repair and parts ordering," said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Maurice Warren, LTF 406 Bn. noncommissioned officer in charge of maintenance. "We provide the forces here with basic maintenance assistance."

The four-Soldier staff acts as K2's organizational maintenance team.

See **MAINTAIN**, Page 4

## CJTF-7 commander says al Qaeda trying to seek foothold in Iraq

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** – Last week's capture of Hassan Ghul along the Iran-Iraq border proves al Qaeda terrorists actively are seeking a foothold in Iraq "to continue their murderous campaigns," the commander of Combined Joint Task Force 7 said in Baghdad Thursday.

"For months I've been saying that al Qaeda's fingerprints have been here in Iraq," Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez told reporters during a briefing. "Those (fingerprints) are showing themselves in the techniques that were being employed by foreign fighters, and this included the tactics being employed by suicide bombers against innocent Iraqis and against coalition forces."

In al Qaeda's chain of command, Ghul reported

See **IRAQ**, Page 4

### Editor's Note...

Today's issue will be the last of its kind. Starting tomorrow, the *Freedom Watch* staff will bring to you a daily two-page edition, which will consist of current world news and sports.

In addition to that, the *Freedom Watch* will put out a weekly 12-page color magazine that will provide local stories about Operation Enduring Freedom troops and activities. The weekly edition will be here soon.

If you have any suggestions about possible story ideas, please contact the editor at 231-4239, or e-mail [Hallste@baf.cjtf180.army.mil](mailto:Hallste@baf.cjtf180.army.mil).

# World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, right, talks with a member of the North Carolina National Guard during a mid-January training exercise.

## Rumsfeld allows more troops

WASHINGTON – Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has granted the U.S. Army permission to add 30,000 troops temporarily to its congressionally approved limit of 482,000, Pentagon officials said Thursday.

The increase will last about four years, the Army chief of staff said.

The Army is already above that limit by 11,000 troops because of “stop-loss” orders keeping Soldiers from leaving the service during military action in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those troops count toward the newly authorized 30,000, which will bring Army troop strength to 512,000.

The Army, as part of its transformation effort, is expanding the number of brigades from 33 to 48.

Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff, told Congress Wednesday the increase is expected to last about four years, and that the Army hopes to build strength through financial incentives and recruiting.

He said the additional troops are part of an effort to reduce the strain on the Army, given the pace of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## U.S. frees three teenagers at Guantanamo base in Cuba

WASHINGTON – Three teenagers who have been held with other prisoners at a U.S. military detention camp in Cuba have been released to their home country, the U.S. Defense Department said Thursday.

The teenagers were detained for more than a year at the U.S. naval complex at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The Defense Depart-

ment didn't identify the detainees' country.

They were part of hundreds rounded up when the U.S. military ousted Afghanistan's Taliban regime for providing haven to al Qaeda, the terrorist network blamed for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Those held are suspected terrorists or supporters of the Taliban.

All three youths were under the age of 16, the Defense Department said. Two were captured during raids on Taliban camps and the other while trying to get weapons to fight U.S. forces, the department said.



Rescue workers inspect the area near the bombed bus after a suicide attack Thursday in Jerusalem.

## At least 10 dead in terror attack

JERUSALEM – At least 10 people were killed on Thursday when a Palestinian policeman got on a passenger bus in Jerusalem and set off a blast as the vehicle neared the Israeli prime minister's home, according to Israeli officials and Palestinian sources.

At least 45 people were wounded in the terror attack. Israeli officials said the attack proved the need for what Israel calls a “security fence,” intended to block terrorists from entering the country.

World leaders condemned the attack.

“Once again, terrorists have killed innocent people and at the same time they have struck a blow once more against the aspirations of the Palestinian people to have a homeland of their own,” U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said. “This kind of action has got to stop.”

In Brussels, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, “Once again I appeal, to Israelis and Palestinians alike, to rise above feelings of anger and vengeance, however natural, and to devote all their energies to negotiating a true and lasting peace in which two

peoples will live side by side, each in their own state.”

The bombing occurred 8:45 a.m. local time in a neighborhood of West Jerusalem where Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's official residence is located. The Israeli leader was not at home at the time.



Tate, left, listens Thursday in court as Deweese Eunick-Paul, mother of Tiffany Eunick, speaks.

## Lionel Tate pleads guilty to second-degree murder charge

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – Lionel Tate pleaded guilty Thursday to second-degree murder in the death of a 6-year-old playmate, finalizing a deal with prosecutors in a case that has stirred national debate over Florida's treatment of juvenile criminals.

Tate declined to speak to the court but the teen offered through his attorney to meet with the mother of the victim.

The mother, Deweese Eunick-Paul, told the court earlier that Tate committed a “brutal murder,” but that she forgave him.

“This was not child's play. This was not roughhousing. This was a brutal murder,” Deweese Eunick-Paul said.

“I firmly believe in God and I believe in forgiveness. I so much believe in God and for that I have forgiven you, Lionel,” she said. “I have forgiven Lionel and I have forgiven Lionel for brutally murdering my daughter.”

Tate, wearing a tan suit and an open collar, showed little reaction as he listened to her.

Tate had claimed he accidentally killed 6-year-old Tiffany Eunick while imitating professional wrestling moves he had seen on television. Tate, who turns 17 on Friday, now says he leaped from a staircase and accidentally landed on her chest.

**IRAQ**, from Page 1

directly to Khalid Sheik Mohammed, mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States.

The general said the terrorist group's tactics and techniques have been apparent in Iraq at least since the November bombing in Nassiriya that killed 18 Italians, and possibly before that.

"The extent of the infrastructure and the extent of the operations here is still evolving," he said.

Sanchez said the use of suicide bombers in Iraq presents a change in tactics by the insurgents, who now are attacking their own countrymen.

The general cited last week's attacks at the so-called "Assassin's Gate" near Mosul, where more than 20 Iraqi citizens have been killed and some 60 wounded.

"It's important to note," he said, "that these Iraqis were attacked because they supported a free and a democratic country. They were killed by those who want to see this country turn back towards terrorism, dictatorship, and those who have a fear of moving forward towards democracy in this part of the world."

Although Sanchez said the coalition has yet to establish the nationalities of any of the suicide bombers behind those successful attacks, coalition authorities believe many to be outsiders.

"We do know that those that we have prevented for the most part have been foreigners," he said. "And we had a Yemeni that was specifically caught in the first day of Ramadan."

Though terrorists still manage to kill and injure coalition soldiers and Iraqi civilians, Sanchez said the coalition, which includes an ever-increasing number of Iraqi security forces, continues to make "great progress" in creating a stable and secure Iraq.

"We have had tremendous success in both preventing and defeating some of the terrorist attacks against the coalition forces," he said. "And working together, we can achieve even greater success in the coming months."

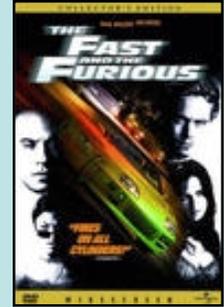
# Bagram Air Base MWR presents

## "The Fast and the Furious"

0830Z at the MWR Building:  
Undercover cops infiltrate Los Angeles street racers to bust a hijacking ring.

**1530Z: Tournament Night**

**Tomorrow's movie:**  
"2 Fast 2 Furious"



# Local weather

## TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
<b>Uzbekistan:</b>	Cloudy/Snow H: 38F L: 20F	Cloudy/Fog H: 40F L: 18F
<b>Bagram:</b>	Cloudy/Fog H: 46F L: 28F	Cloudy/Fog H: 52F L: 27F
<b>Kabul:</b>	Cloudy/Fog H: 45F L: 27F	Cloudy/Fog H: 50F L: 25F
<b>Kandahar:</b>	Sunny/Haze H: 55F L: 34F	Sunny/Haze H: 50F L: 32F

*Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team*

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CJTF-180 Commander —  
Brig. Gen. (P) Lloyd J. Austin III  
CJTF-180 Command Sergeant Major —  
Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Carey  
Public Affairs Officer —  
Maj. Matthew L. Garner  
Public Affairs Sergeant Major —  
Master Sgt. Sharon Opeka

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Commander — Maj. Matthew L. Garner  
NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Keith Thompson  
Editor — Sgt. Stephanie Hall  
Journalists — Staff Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson,  
Sgt. Gregory Heath, Spc. Kelly Hunt

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**MAINTAIN**, from Page 1

They resolve problems that occur with all of K2's 4-wheeled all terrain vehicles (Gators), High-Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) and generators.

"As the organizational maintenance team we generally handle small problems that arise," said Staff Sgt. Patrick Witt, LTF 406<sup>th</sup> Bn. senior mechanic. "Things such as conducting preventive maintenance, checks and services, ordering parts like lights and hoses, or servicing generators are all things we are able to handle."

Warren noted that the LTF 406<sup>th</sup> Bn. also provides the maintenance for the generators that facilitate the Jordanian Hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan.

As the LTF 406<sup>th</sup> Bn. handles those small problems that prevent major calamities, when catastrophes do occur K2 never has to worry for the LTF 406<sup>th</sup> simply hands the wrench over to the 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co, who operate as K2's heavy duty-maintenance work shop – their mechanical backbone.

"When problem is too big for us we send units to the 1015<sup>th</sup>,"

said Witt. "Between the two of us, there aren't many problems we really can't fix."

"Our job is to pick up where LTF 406<sup>th</sup> leaves off," said Capt. Fred Hoose, commander of the 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co. "We are the direct support maintenance company for K2 and Afghanistan."

As the direct support maintenance team, the 1015<sup>th</sup> orders, repairs or replaces engines, axles, transmissions, repairs generators, environment control units, forklifts, does welding and fabrications, and any other weighty repairs for the CJOA.

Since arriving in August of 2003, the 1015<sup>th</sup> has helped K2's maintenance operation perform at a high efficiency level and has maintained a 95 percent job open and closure rating of its own.

"A lot of the Soldiers in our unit do maintenance work in their civilian jobs," said Staff Sgt. Leonard Murray, 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co. senior mechanic. "So many of the problems we encounter we've seen before and can quickly make a diagnosis of what's wrong."

"We are a very competitive group and have great team cohesion. We've put pressure on ourselves to excel as a unit," said Spc. Jason Parham, 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co. mechanic. "We've put pressure on ourselves to do a job quickly, so customers don't have to wait long periods of time for their equipment, but more importantly we pressure ourselves to do the job right."

Agreeing with Parham, Warren affirmed, "We are a small staff and aren't trained to handle major repairs. (The 1015<sup>th</sup>) has more bodies and has the necessary training to take on large jobs. They really help us to better perform the mission here at K2."

A 60-Soldier staff, the 1015<sup>th</sup> consists of five sections – automotive, generator, allied trade, small arms and communications.

"Most of units here didn't bring maintenance capabilities," said Hoose. "So it's beneficial having the LTF 406<sup>th</sup> and us here to handle the (range) of maintenance needs they have."

Along with providing direct support for mechanical work, the 1015<sup>th</sup> also provides an equipment and vehicles recovery mission of for K2.

"Everything that breaks down we are responsible for recovering it and getting it back to the unit," said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Anthony Kingston, 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co. supervisor.

Kingston added that the unit has a log time of 24 hours to respond to a breakdown, and has to have the equipment or vehicle recovered within 72 hours.

Though the maintenance team is not physically fighting in the War on Terrorism, they take gratification in knowing every piece of equipment they order, replace or repair is helping those fighting win the battle.

"We are like an engine," said Master Sgt. Don Abraham, 1015<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co. maintenance shop noncommissioned officer in charge. "Every part is significant and no part is more or less valuable than the other because all the parts are needed to make a vehicle run. We're all part of a linkage and each part is vital to the big picture – the promotion of democracy."



*Spc. Jason Parham, 1015th Maintenance Company, loosens a bolt on a HMMV as he and two fellow Soldiers replace the HMMV's engine.*



# Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *SI.com*)

## Kobe leads re-elected All-Star starters

**NEW YORK** – Kobe Bryant was selected to start in the NBA All-Star game, voted in by fans despite a sexual assault charge.

The Los Angeles Lakers star led Western Conference guards with 1,759,717 votes in final results released Thursday, fourth among all players.

He was picked to start in front of his hometown fans at Staples Center on Feb. 15 in the 53<sup>rd</sup> NBA All-Star game.

Bryant's teammate, Shaquille O'Neal, was beaten out for the second straight year by Houston's Yao Ming. The Chinese center edged O'Neal by less than 32,000 votes.

"That's cool," O'Neal said. "Where he's from there are 2 trillion people."

But it was O'Neal who got more electronic votes from fans around the world, while Yao had the advantage in paper ballots available in the United States and Canada.

Joining Bryant and Yao on the Western Conference squad were Rockets guard Steve Francis, San Antonio forward Tim Duncan and Minnesota forward Kevin Garnett, last year's All-Star game MVP.

Toronto Raptors forward Vince Carter led all players with 2,127,183 votes. It's the fourth time he's finished first in the voting, tied for second all-time with Julius Erving. Michael Jordan holds the record with nine.

Indiana's Jermaine O'Neal will be the other starting forward for the Eastern Conference. The center is Ben Wallace of the Detroit Pistons, and the guards are Philadelphia's Allen Iverson and Orlando's Tracy McGrady.

## Owners approve sale of LA Dodgers

**LOS ANGELES** – Frank McCourt talks a good game. Time will tell if his team plays enough of them.

The \$430 million sale of the Los Angeles Dodgers from News Corp. to McCourt was unanimously approved by baseball owners Thursday, more than 3 1/2 months after the sides reached an agreement.

Under scrutiny over his finances and a target of local criticism, McCourt made some bold promises at a Dodger Stadium news conference.

"Welcome to a new era of Dodger baseball," he said. "I intend to restore the glory days of Dodger baseball with a team worthy of



*Vince Carter and Kevin Garnett were the leading vote getters in their respective conferences.*

support from our fans. We've committed not just to buy this team, but to win a world championship."

The Dodgers haven't won a postseason game since beating Oakland in the 1988 World Series.

"That's way too long," McCourt said. "My first objective is to end the drought. I truly know I can provide the leadership that this team needs to win."

## Agassi's quest for title ended by Safin

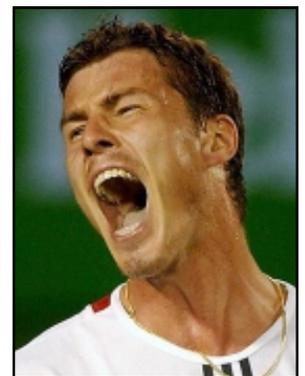
**MELBOURNE, Australia** – Defending champion Andre Agassi was beaten in the Australian Open semifinals Friday, losing to a surging Marat Safin in five sets.

Agassi, bidding for his ninth Grand Slam title, fell 7-6 (6), 7-6 (6), 5-7, 1-6, 6-3 to an opponent who ousted top-ranked Andy Roddick in the quarterfinals.

Agassi rallied after dropping the first two set but Safin persevered, ending the fourth-seeded American's 26-match winning streak at the Australian Open. Agassi called this "the toughest day I've had."

"Marat played at an incredibly high level," Agassi said. "I forced him to play at that level the whole time. Sometimes you just need a little luck at the right time. I had chances that went away."

Safin next meets the winner of Friday's semifinal between second-seeded Roger Federer and Juan Carlos Ferrero, a showdown for the No. 1 ranking.



*Marat Safin beat five Americans on his way to a second Aussie Open final.*

## Patriots list three on injury report

**HOUSTON** – Three New England Patriots remained probable Thursday for the Super Bowl, and the Carolina Panthers had no injuries to report for the second consecutive day.

Patriots linebacker Tedy Bruschi, tight end Christian Fauria and running back Patrick Pass were given a 75 percent chance of playing against Carolina, according to the official injury report.

"I didn't have any setbacks, so I feel like I'm good and ready to go," Bruschi said. "We don't tell a lot of things about injuries around here, but I think you can tell by people's demeanors if they're going to play.

"If I wasn't going to play, I probably wouldn't be saying a word right now, and just sort of sulking. But, I think things are going well and I'm upbeat because I think things have gone well."

Bruschi hurt his right leg near the end of the Patriots' victory over the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC Championship Game. Fauria was listed with a leg injury, and Pass with an ankle injury.

# Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

## Explosion kills 7 Soldiers, injures 3

By Kirk Semple

*(The New York Times)* – Seven American Soldiers in Afghanistan were killed and three were injured in an explosion today in one of the single most-deadly incidents involving American forces since military action began in late 2001, the United States Central Command said.

An interpreter was also killed in the explosion and another American Soldier has been missing since the incident, which occurred near Ghazni around 3 p.m. local time, about 60 miles southwest of the capital, Kabul, the military reported.

The Soldiers were working “around a weapons cache” when the explosion occurred, the military reported.

Spokesmen for Central Command and the Pentagon offered no further details about the incident, saying that American authorities in Afghanistan were still investigating.

The wounded Soldiers were evacuated to the 452<sup>nd</sup> Combat Support Hospital at Bagram Air Base. The Soldiers’ names are being withheld pending notification of relatives.

## U.N. mission to Afghanistan steps up

**UNITED NATIONS** *(Press Release)* – The United Nations Mission to Afghanistan reported today that it is intensifying efforts to support women’s participation in the electoral process, focusing its initiatives on those cities where the female turnout to register to vote is low.

Staff from the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) this week met local officials in Kunduz, where women comprise about 17 percent of the people who have registered since the process began in early December.

A UNAMA spokesman said officials agreed on the need for more public education for women in the area. Mobile radio broadcasts encouraging women to register to vote will be stepped up.

In Kandahar, where female registration is also low, UNAMA staff and local women’s leaders have devised a strategy to make daily announcements of voter registration rates to increase local awareness.

The spokesman said measures are also being taken in Gardez and Jalalabad to boost the female voter registration rates.

Voter registration for the national presidential and parliamentary elections, scheduled for later this year, is confined so far to Afghanistan’s eight major cities. Registration is expected to follow across the rural parts of the country once security improves.

Women make up just over 22 percent of the 628,964 registered Afghans, according to UNAMA.

## Afghanistan tightens security in Kabul

*(Associated Press)* – Peacekeepers and local authorities tightened security in the Afghan capital Thursday as they sought to

determine who was behind the suicide attacks that killed two foreign Soldiers in the last two days.

Police said they were mounting extra foot patrols and checkpoints and sending undercover officers into the 3 million-strong city in a bid to catch anyone preparing a third strike.

“Security is now five times tighter than before,” said Mohammed Haroon Asefi, a police commander at the Interior Ministry.

The attacks marked an escalation in the insurgency that is focused on the country’s south and east. A spokesman for the Taliban, the hard-line Islamic regime ousted by a U.S.-led coalition in late 2001, claimed responsibility for the killings.

The spokesman also said its fighters planned more bombings in Afghan cities.

**“Fixed wing, rotary wing, fixed wing, rotary wing...”**



kevin\_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

**Laugh Support**