

TF 44 joins ISAF in mass casualty training

Story and photo by Sgt. Greg Heath
4th Public Affairs Detachment

KABUL, Afghanistan – Bodies of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) soldiers were sprawled across Kabul International Airport’s airfield as UH-60 Blackhawk medical evacuation helicopters touched down to quickly move the critically injured to a nearby hospital.

Fortunately, it was only practice this time for the Medical Task Force 44 Air Ambulance assets out of Bagram, as they worked together with all of the ISAF medical forces in the Kabul area Aug. 9 in a mass casualty exercise at on the Kabul airfield.

For the exercise scenario enemy forces had attacked ISAF units with mortars and



ISAF soldiers move a simulated casualty to the Med. TF 44 air ambulance to be medevaced to a nearby hospital facility during their mass casualty exercise at Kabul International Airport.

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Casspir spooks mines out of existence

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

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – The atmosphere was peaceful. The ground looked solid and reliable, but the driver of the Casspir knew better. Inch by inch the steel machine drove over the ground until an enormous “bomb” shook the earth and smoke and dust enveloped the machine.

Moments later the machine emerged from the cloud and continued on its path.

The Casspir is a steel, armor-bodied vehicle presently used to destroy mines. It covers Bagram Air Base’s surrounding perimeter areas little by little each day, spooking the devastating mines out of the ground without the mines having the disastrous affect on personnel or equipment as it was intended to.

Weighing in at nearly 10 tons, the Casspir is a heavyweight in its field. Each steel wheel weighs 800 kilograms (1760 lbs), said Allen Stokes with RONCO, an American de-mining cooperation. It’s size keeps the machine unaffected by the explosive mines and protects its occupants from the mine’s

wrath.

“It can take up to three anti-tank mines under each wheel and you will still be safe inside,” said Rudy v/d Westhuizen with MECHEM, a South African international commercial de-mining company. “It’s one of the only vehicles I know that can take that.”

It’s a very heavy and big machine, said Stokes. But despite its size, the Casspir is a basic piece of machinery, very simplistic, he said.

Personnel working with the Casspir have been in Bagram for a month now and the machine has proven very useful in mine clearing and area reduction.

“The Casspir for us is used mainly for area reduction,” said Stokes. “We drive it up and down the area and test the ground to see if it either has mines or doesn’t.”

Everyday, the Casspir makes a dent in Bagram’s minefields, riding around somewhere trying to clear as much area as possible, he said.

With the Casspir’s help, areas can be cleared at a much

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World News

(Compiled from CNN.com)



The rocket, carrying astronaut Yang Liwei, blasts into space Tuesday morning.

China's space mission lifts off

CNN – China has launched its first manned spacecraft becoming only the third country in history to put a man into space, state-run Xinhua news agency has reported.

The launch came at just after 9 a.m. local time (0100GMT) from the remote Jiuquan launch site in the Gobi Desert, the agency said.

The Shenzhou V spacecraft carrying just one astronaut was blasted into space atop a Long March 2-F rocket.

The man chosen to pilot the flight is a 38-year-old former air force pilot named Yang Liwei, Xinhua said.

His picture was printed on the front of Hong Kong-based newspaper *Wen Wei Po* Tuesday as the man most likely to pilot the craft.

He is expected to make 14 orbits of the Earth during a flight lasting just short of 24 hours before coming back to land in Inner Mongolia.

If it is successful the flight will bring China membership of an elite space club, making it only the third country after Russia and the U.S. capable of putting humans into space and returning them safely to Earth.

Chinese President Hu Jintao was among a select group of top leaders and VIPs who witnessed the launch.

The Chinese government is banking on the launch giving a boost to national pride and demonstrating China's technological prowess.



U.S. soldiers seal off the area around the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad after Tuesday's blast.

Suicide blast hits near Turkish Embassy in Iraq Tuesday

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A suicide car bomb detonated Tuesday afternoon in the Iraqi capital near the Turkish Embassy, the second such bombing in the past three days.

Like Sunday's bombing near the Baghdad Hotel, security measures kept the bomber from reaching his intended target.

Unlike the hotel attack — when at least seven other people were killed — only the bomber died Tuesday, U.S. and Turkish officials said.

Coalition military spokesman Col. Peter Mansoor said the embassy security was increased last week after what he called a walk-in informant delivered information on a possible explosion being planned there.

Three more U.S. soldiers were reported dead Tuesday, bringing the number of Americans killed in Iraq to 331.

Two 1st Armored Division soldiers were killed in an vehicle accident. The third soldier, whose body was found floating in the Euphrates River, died of unknown causes; he was with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. Both incidents are being investigated.

In Washington, meanwhile, top Bush administration officials and congressional Republicans stepped up complaints about news coverage of the war, saying national news outlets ignore good news in favor of stories

on violence.

“The American people are not getting the full story about the progress we are making in Iraq,” White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.



This photograph shows a man believed to be Lewis at the Tel Aviv airport the day Lewis' daughter arrived.

Most-wanted U.S. fugitive arrested in Israel

CNN — A man wanted by the United States for 13 years on charges of trying to smuggle 25 tons of hashish into Oregon has been captured in Israel, authorities said Tuesday.

Until his arrest, Sidney Marvin Lewis had been one of the U.S. Marshals Service's most-wanted fugitives. The long manhunt had often frustrated and baffled law enforcement officials.

Israeli police made the arrest late last week in the southern seaport town of Elat, where Lewis had set up a scuba diving shop along the Red Sea and lived with his wife, authorities said.

Fingerprints confirmed his identity Monday, and Lewis faces an initial hearing Wednesday in Israel.

Lewis, 66, fled the United States in January 1990 after being charged with possession with intent to distribute 25 tons of hashish in Oregon. Over the years, his trails had gone cold, and he had become an enigma to law enforcement.

“It just reinforces to us that you can run, but you can't hide,” said Tom Nunley, a senior inspector with the U.S. Marshals Service, who vowed before his colleagues that he would capture Lewis. “People are held accountable for their actions.”

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rockets, leaving 20 soldiers severely injured, 10 with non-life threatening injuries, and a few other soldiers were dead on the scene, according to exercise coordinator and Royal Netherlands Army Maj. Edgar Heida, Headquarters ISAF.

Heida, who had requested TF 44's participation, said it was important to incorporate their neighbors from Bagram into the exercise.

"The aim is that we have to train together," said Heida. "We have to work together so everyone knows procedures and gets the timing right."

It was the air ambulance team's responsibility to move the patients from the mass triage site, which ISAF had created on the scene, to a military medical facility in another part of Kabul.

When the two TF 44 helicopters arrived, they had to quickly coordinate with the ISAF medical teams, which incorporated

forces from at least four different nations with many speaking different languages, to get the most critical patients on the helicopters first.

Initially, the Bagram medical teams just got to step back and observe how the predominately German Army forces handled the chaotic scene.

"There were providers everywhere, so they didn't have to help with the triage aspect," said Staff Sgt. Christian Loftus, 1163rd Area Support Medical Company, Med. TF 44.

"We got an idea of how different countries perform medical care, and it is different from us," he added about how the Germans put more emphasis on treating patients on site, as opposed to the U.S. Army's practice of evacuating the casualties as soon as possible.

Before the exercise was over, the TF 44 air ambulance teams medevaced six German Army casualties to the medical facility located a few minutes away.

According to air medic Sgt. Robert

Dorris, 45th Air Ambulance Company, Med. TF 44, participating in the mission was a positive experience, especially considering all the personnel from different national armies on scene with their varied types of procedures.

"Everyone will learn lessons from this," Dorris said. "As medics we got an idea of how they work and what they expect from us, and we were able to inform them of the type of things that we are capable of," he added, explaining how the German's learned that the air ambulance medics are able to treat patients in route, which ultimately could cut down on the time casualties remain at the triage site.

For ISAF, this was their first large scale mass casualty exercise in Kabul, so they understood that there would be room left for improvement, according to Heida.

"It's so important, and we'll do it again and again until it works," said Heida. "If something big happens, we should be prepared."

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faster rate than manual de-mining tactics alone.

"If you have a thousand mines, you have to lift a thousand mines by hand," said v/d Westhuizen. "If you take a Casspir and you (set) off 980 mines, there's only a risk of twenty mines."

Determining which areas are mined and which are mine free is sorted out through many techniques. One method used in Afghanistan is soil samples.

"We take samples of the soil for every 200 meters of the road and send it to the dog training area (where) they test every sample (to see) if it's positive or negative,"

said v/d Westhuizen. "If it's positive, the de-miners go back to that area and 99.9 percent (of the time) they find some explosives, whether it be bullets or mines."

The mine detecting dogs and personnel working with the Casspir have a close partnership, he said. It's important to work together. The teamwork provides them with a speed and

accuracy the group prides themselves on.

"We are very fast," said v/d Westhuizen. "We did 400 meters and we detonated more than 500 mines in two days." But most importantly, they are proud to be ridding the area of the hazardous material.

"If those mines are still there, they are danger to anybody; a danger to human beings, to children," he said. "That's why we're here."

Though personnel working with the Casspir agree that it's a rewarding job, they admit the element of danger goes hand in hand with it.

"Any job with explosives is dangerous," said v/d Westhuizen. "But you are much safer inside a Casspir than outside."



The Casspir, a steel, armor bodied vehicle used for de-mining in several countries made its way to Bagram Air Base a month ago and has been successful to the de-mining mission.

The Casspir has "been used in various countries around the world, but no one has used it as intensely as we're looking forward to using it here," said Stokes.

"We did a lot of mine clearance all over the world with the Casspir's," said v/d Westhuizen. "It's the most effective, fastest way of mine clearance that we know (of) and (that) there is."

ANA soldiers receive uniform donations from Norwegians

In a ceremony October 2, the Norwegian ambassador to Afghanistan signed over more than 15,000 uniforms to the Afghan National Army. The uniforms, which were donated to the ANA, had been sitting in storage in Norway for months and will soon be put to use by the Afghan military.

“We are pleased with the alliance and thankful for their commitment to assist our country,” said Brig. Gen. Ghulam Asifi, commander of Kabul Military Training Center. “We are starting from ground zero, so support of any kind is welcomed.”

Norway’s uniform donation is just part of its long-term commitment to Afghanistan. “I view this as a token of our friendship,” said Norwegian Ambassador Bjorn Johannessen. “If and when we can help, we will.”

Providing the ANA with uniforms supports the Norwegian government’s focus to fulfill three goals it has set to reestablish peace and development in Afghanistan. These goals are in education, strengthening the central government, and increasing economic opportunities for Afghans. In order to provide ordinary people with safe living conditions, the ANA forces must be well equipped.

“Every thing here is based on the economy,” said Asifi. “By donating these quality uniforms, the Norwegians are allowing us to spend money on other operational needs. All of the international donations we receive for the ANA help us conserve fiscal resources.”

Ambassador Johannessen echoed Asifi’s comments, “there is an inter linkage between (economic) development and security, strengthening security will help preserve progress for development.”

Providing for those who defend and secure Afghanistan will help citizens feel more safe when establishing a business or building a home. The people of Afghanistan can be confident the Coalition is working together to build and equip the ANA as well as they can in the interest of the people and for the people.

(Information provided by CJTF 180 press release.)

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

“Spiderman”

1530Z at the MWR building:

When bitten by a genetically modified spider, a nerdy high school student gains spider-like abilities which he must eventually use to fight evil as a superhero.

Tomorrow’s movie: “Shallow Hal”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
Bagram:	Haze H: 73F L: 45F	Haze H: 73F L: 45F
Kandahar:	Clear H: 84F L: 48F	Clear H: 84F L: 48F
Kabul:	Haze H: 70F L: 39F	Partly Cloudy H: 68F L: 41F
Uzbekistan:	Partly Cloudy H: 75F L: 38F	Sunny H: 76F L: 37F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com and SI.com)

Marlins stun Cubs with eight-run eighth inning



A fan prevents Moises Alou from making the second out in the eighth inning.

CHICAGO — Five outs to go. Wrigley Field crowd on its feet. World Series within their grasp.

Then, it was almost as if the baseball gods realized these were the Chicago Cubs.

Those lovable losers blew it again thanks in part to — of all things — one of their own fans.

In a stunning eighth-inning turnaround, the Florida Marlins took advantage of left fielder Moises Alou's run-in with a fan on a foul fly and an error by shortstop Alex Gonzalez to score eight runs in an 8-3 victory Tuesday night, forcing the NL Championship Series to a Game 7.

Mark Prior, Sammy Sosa and the Cubs cruised into the eighth with a 3-0 lead, all set to end their 58-year absence from the World Series.

What followed was a stunning collapse that would rival anything in the Cubs' puzzling, painful past.

Now, after the Marlins' second straight win in the series, it goes down to Wednesday night. Ace Kerry Wood will pitch for Chicago, while Marlins manager Jack McKeon will go with Mark Redman.

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What followed was a stunning collapse that would rival anything in the Cubs' puzzling, painful past.

Chad Fox got the win and Prior took the loss, although long-suffering fans in Chicago — still waiting for the Cubs' first Series championship since 1908 — will certainly blame the fan.

David Wells leaves Red Sox one loss away

BOSTON — David Wells offended just about every member of the Yankees' organization this season, from George Steinbrenner to teammates, and there is really only one way to gain redemption in the Yankees' world. All sins are forgiven if you win in the postseason.

And by beating Boston, 4-2, in Game 5 of the American League Championship Series here Tuesday, Wells probably went beyond penance and straight into sainthood in the eyes of the manic Yan-



Karim Garcia drove in two of the Yank's four runs Tuesday

kees' owner. Wells' strong seven innings gave the Yankees a 3 games to 2 lead in the best-of-seven series and put a stranglehold on the Red Sox, who can reach the World Series only by winning Games 6 and 7 in Yankee Stadium Wednesday and Thursday.

"I live for this time," said Wells. "I live for being the guy to go out there and be the one on the mound, try to make things happen, try to shut the other team down, because I'm not afraid to fail."

Boston's pitching matchups in the last two games are not exactly advantageous, either: John Burkett, the Game 6 starter, has been pounded by the Yankees in the past, and he faces Andy Pettitte, the Yankees' best pitcher this season. Game 7 starter Pedro Martinez seems to be waning as the postseason progresses, and he would face Roger Clemens.

The Yankees have held Boston's prolific offense to 15 runs in the five games of this prolific series; the Red Sox have 32 runs in 10 playoff games and they managed only six baserunners in seven innings in Game 5 against a pitcher who was in virtual exile earlier this season.

Kobe's prosecutors accused of smearing

EAGLE, Colo. — Prosecutors accused Kobe Bryant's attorneys of deliberately smearing the reputation of his accuser Tuesday as they asked a judge to make sure any evidence about her sexual history is heard behind closed doors.

In a sharply worded court filing, prosecutors said defense attorney Pamela Mackey stepped over the line last week when she asked a detective at the preliminary hearing whether injuries to the 19-year-old accuser were "consistent with a person who had sex with three different men in three days."

That question prompted Eagle County Judge Frederick Gannett to end the hearing, which resumes Wednesday and will determine whether the NBA superstar will stand trial on a sexual assault charge.

Prosecutors said the question was a "deliberate and calculated" attempt to elicit testimony on evidence irrelevant so early in the case and came even though "attorneys are expected to proceed in an ethical manner."

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

U.S., Afghan forces tighten net on Taliban

KABUL, Afghanistan (*Reuters*) - U.S. helicopter gunships struck positions of a group of Taliban militants Tuesday in the central province of Uruzgan as joint U.S. and Afghan ground forces tightened a siege of the guerrillas, officials said.

At least three Taliban fighters and one Afghan government soldier have been killed in clashes since Monday in Darwan village of Char Cheny district, a day after Taliban guerrillas killed four soldiers in an ambush in the area, they said.

"We and American troops have tightened the siege on the Taliban," district chief Abdur Rahman told *Reuters*. "We are moving forward, but the Taliban are fighting fiercely too."

"Three Taliban bodies have been spotted, but I don't have fresh casualty figures for our troops except for the one killed and the four wounded from yesterday."

Rahman said two U.S. helicopter gunships, and about two dozen U.S. soldiers, were supporting up to 400 government troops.

He did not have any figure for the Taliban force.

Uruzgan was part of the main heartland of the Taliban regime overthrown by U.S.-led forces in late 2001.

The volatile province has been the scene of repeated Taliban raids since the radical militia fell, and the latest clash comes amid growing signs of a guerrilla resurgence in the south and southeast.

More than 300 people, including civilians, government troops, local aid workers, American soldiers and many guerrillas have been killed and scores wounded in violence since early August, the bloodiest period since the Taliban fell.

There was no immediate comment from the U.S. military, which leads an 11,500-strong force hunting Taliban and al Qaeda remnants in Afghanistan.

Afghan intelligence helps fight terror

By Michael Kitchen

ISLAMABAD, Afghanistan (*Kabul Daily*) -- A top U.N. official says Afghanistan is providing critical help in stopping the flow of funding to the al Qaeda terror network and the former Afghan Taliban regime.

Chilean diplomat Heraldito Munoz, who heads the U.N. committee in charge of sanctions against al Qaeda and the Taliban, says Afghan intelligence is key in halting the two organizations' funding.

Speaking to reporters on a visit to the Afghan capital Kabul, Mr. Munoz says recently provided information from Afghanistan has helped the world body hone its list of illicit funding sources.

"They have provided information that has improved immensely the quality of the names that were there, that has led even to the

elimination of some names," he said. "And I think this visit will produce a further qualitative step in the information that we have."

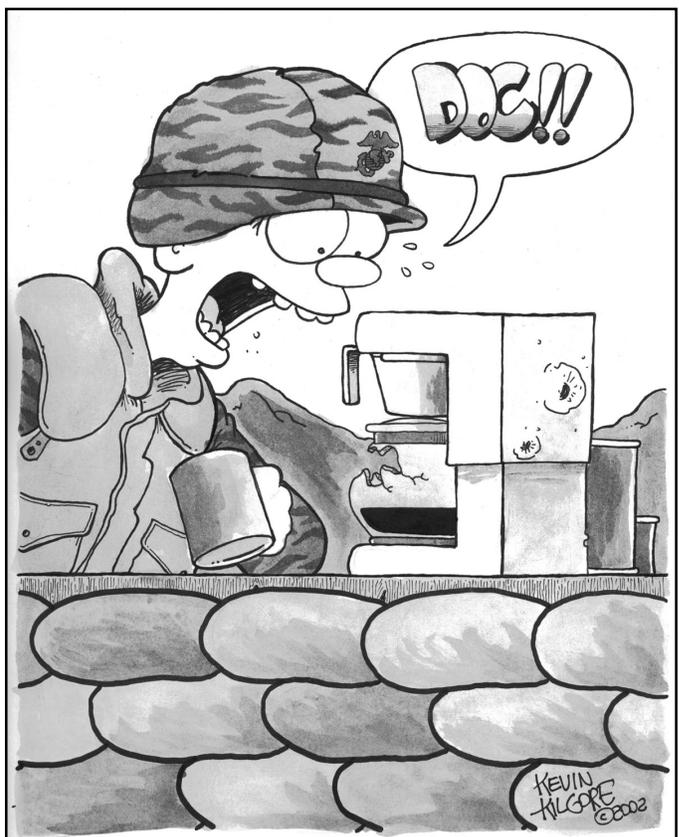
Mr. Munoz says his committee has seized about \$120 million slated for the two sanctioned groups. But he adds that money is still coming into the coffers of al Qaeda and the Taliban, in part through the narcotics trade. He says many officials believe there is a strong connection between the recent increase in Taliban attacks against Afghan government targets and the sale of opium.

Although the Taliban themselves strictly banned the cultivation of opium poppy during the last year of their rule, the narcotic plant is now openly grown and sold in parts of Afghanistan.

The religiously conservative Taliban regime fell from power in 2001, deposed by a coalition of Afghan and U.S. forces.

The United States went to war against the regime for its support of al Qaeda, a global extremist network blamed for the devastating attacks against New York and Washington on September 11, 2001.

Coffee pot down



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support