

Paving the way to Bagram's stability



Local national contract workers even concrete by hand as a compactor machine completes the process, smoothing the area right in front of the gym entrance in hopes of making it a safer, more stable environment for troops. This is just one way troops with the FET-28 are trying to improve the quality of life at Bagram.

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

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – An extension of the recently completed Disney road-paving project has been put into affect in an effort to make Bagram safer for troops stationed here.

The base gym area is one spot where local contract workers are hand-mixing cement that will be laid within the next few days in support of this new project.

“Paving the entrance way creates a more stable, safer walkway and driveway for soldiers and also helps with dust control in the warmer months,” said Capt. Eric Wayne, Facility Engineer Team-28.

Injuries, such as twisted ankles, were frequent near the gym entrance due to the rocks and this was one reason troops with the FET-28 were inspired to add a paved surface in that location. In addition to injury prevention, the road running past the gym entrance was a high traffic area for vehicles creating an abundance of dust.

“It’ll help with the dust so it doesn’t effect the people in the gym and just improves the quality of life for the everyday Soldier here,” said Wayne.

“The Disney road project is complete for what the initial scope was,” he said “This is an extension of the

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Vets purchased freedom for America, Myers says

Story by Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, Va. – Throughout America’s history, veterans “purchased the freedom we enjoy today,” Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers said here today.

Myers spoke to more than 4,000 veterans at the “Salute to Military Aviation Veterans” at

the Smithsonian Institution’s Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center. The salute was part of the opening ceremonies for the \$311 million center, a part of the National Air and Space Museum. The center opens to the public on Dec. 15, just before the centennial of the Wright brothers’ flight on Dec. 17.

Before Myers took the rostrum, the Air Force “Airmen of Note” musical group played a selection of big band-era songs while dressed in World War II Army Air Forces uniforms. When

the leader of the group asked how many in the audience recognized the uniform, about half of the hands went up.

It was a great celebration for the World War II vets. Many of them dug out their A2 leather flight jackets and put them on once again. Many rolled into the event in wheelchairs pushed by their children or grandchildren.

The Airmen of Note trace their lineage to

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



The U.S. last week said it launched its biggest military offensive in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban.

Children found crushed to death

KABUL, Afghanistan – Six children have been found crushed to death by a collapsed wall after a U.S. assault on a compound in Afghanistan, the U.S. military says.

Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty said Wednesday it was not clear whether the children, along with two adults also killed, died as a direct result of the raid on Friday in the city of Gardez.

A day later, nine children died following a U.S. airstrike in the central Afghan village of Petaw, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) southwest of Kabul.

“After we went in there (the Gardez compound), we determined the next day ... the bodies of two adults and six children (were found) under a collapsed wall,” Hilferty said at Bagram Air Base.

“We don’t know what caused the wall to collapse because, although we fired on the compound, there were secondary and tertiary explosions.”

The complex housed a huge cache of weapons of renegade Afghan commander Mullah Jalani, but he was not at the site at the time of the attack, Hilferty said.

Several other people were arrested after the assault by warplanes and troops, he added, but did not say whether the two adults killed were combatants or civilians.

The U.S. military – which last weekend launched “Operation Avalanche”, its biggest operation against militants since the fall of the Taliban two years ago – says it found a huge cache of weapons at the compound including hidden storage compartments containing hundreds of rockets, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and several howitzers.

Sources: Man allegedly linked to al Qaeda cell arrested

WASHINGTON – A man who allegedly has ties to al Qaeda and has trained in its camps is in federal custody in Minneapolis, Minn., law enforcement sources said Wednesday.

The details are under seal because the man is being held as a material witness in a federal investigation, those sources said.

One source said the man, arrested Tuesday, has provided information about Zacarias Moussaoui, an al Qaeda operative arrested in Minnesota in August 2001.

Moussaoui, 35, is the only defendant facing trial in connection to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. He was indicted two years ago this month. He faces six charges, including conspiracy to commit terrorism and conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction.



Davis Hubb tries to resist the flu shot while his mother Jeanie and friend Tanner Johnson hold him in Whitefish, Mont.

Flu season comes on strong

(CNN) – Widespread outbreaks have been reported in at least 13 states – mostly in the West – but federal health officials say this year’s flu season has not yet peaked – and vaccine supplies are running low.

“It hasn’t reached what we call the epidemic threshold status yet, in terms of deaths from influenza-like illness,” said Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Ga. “But we won’t be surprised if that happens given the pattern emerging right now.”

The season began early, with about 5 percent of patients visiting the doctor or clinic for flu-like illnesses at the end of November, the CDC reported – that’s twice the percentage of patients

expected at this time of year. Only the District of Columbia and Massachusetts have not reported cases. The especially virulent strain of the virus that is predominant this season was not included in this year’s flu vaccine. Health officials are investigating whether this strain might be particularly harmful to kids.

Raids net dozens of insurgents

BAGHDAD, Iraq – More than 50 U.S.-led raids across Iraq have resulted in the capture of dozens of Saddam Fedayeen and other Iraqi insurgents, including those believed responsible for an ambush last month that killed seven Spanish intelligence officers, the coalition said Wednesday.

One of the most extensive raids came in the town of Lutafiyah, south of Baghdad, where paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division and Iraqi police carried out Operation Panther Squeeze, going to 18 separate locations searching for those behind the attack on the Spanish forces.

“During the raids, 15 primary targets were captured with a total of 41 enemy personnel taken for questioning,” a statement from the 82nd Airborne said. The 82nd Airborne said the “actual attackers” were among those captured, as was the cell leader, a man identified as Abu Abdullah. In addition, forces captured an Iraqi intelligence officer, a financier of the Iraqi insurgents and doctors “who treat terrorists so they can avoid treatment at local hospitals.”

Brown charged with battery

ATLANTA – Singer Bobby Brown was charged with battery Wednesday after a weekend altercation with his wife, singer Whitney Houston, in which he allegedly threatened to “beat her ass,” authorities said.

Brown appeared with his lawyer before a judge Wednesday afternoon after meeting with detectives and a court solicitor, said Fulton County Police Cpl. Kurtis Young.

He was charged with one count of battery under Georgia’s domestic violence law and released. He must return to North Fulton Magistrate Court to answer the charge Jan. 7, according to Fulton County Police. Video from a local news station showed Houston and Brown at the court appearance, Houston with a visible bruise on her left cheek.

Troop rotations won't affect readiness, defense leaders say

Story by Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Troop rotations in Iraq during the next several months will create a temporary transition time in Iraq - but will in no way affect U.S. readiness in Iraq or anywhere else in the world, Defense leaders told Pentagon reporters today.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld acknowledged that moving a large percentage of the 123,000 combat-experienced troops from Iraq will create a temporary sense of turbulence, which he said “is always undesirable.”

“You lose situational awareness, you lose relationships, you lose the experience,” he said. “The people going over are ready, but the people there are experienced and really know their stuff.”

On the plus side, Rumsfeld said, units deploying to Iraq will be better configured to meet current tasks than the departing troops.

In an effort to minimize disruptions during the transition, Rumsfeld said defense leaders must “manage the transition very carefully.

“There is going to have to be overlap,” he said. “We are going to have to be sensitive to the fact that the knowledge that is built up there and the relationships have to be transferred ... in a way that is appropriate.”

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters the rotations will introduce huge logistical challenges as well. “In the next four months, we are going to pull off a logistics feat that will rival any in history, I think, as we move a major part of the Army,” he said. “Well over the majority of the Army combat units and a lot of the reserve component will move.”

Rumsfeld acknowledged that redeploying troops will “clearly have to be reconstituted” when they return to their home bases.

Myers said defense plans account for the time required for these forces to reconstitute themselves and that the U.S. military will remain fully ready – even in the event that it is called to respond to an additional war or contingency before all troops return home from Iraq.

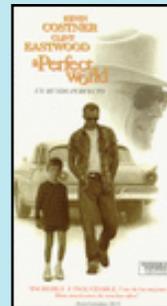
Bagram Air Base MWR presents

“A Perfect World”

1530Z at the MWR building:

After escaping from a Huntsville prison, convict Butch Haynes and his partner Terry Pugh kidnap a young boy...

Tomorrow's movie:
“Firefox”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Friday
Bagram:	Mostly Cloudy H: 52F L: 28F	Rain H: 50F L: 27F
Kandahar:	Mostly Cloudy H: 57F L: 30F	Mostly Cloudy H: 48F L: 27F
Kabul:	Mostly Cloudy H: 50F L: 25F	Rain H: 48F L: 27F
Uzbekistan:	Snow H: 40F L: 28F	Snow H: 39F L: 28F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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CJTF-180 Commander —
Brig. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III
CJTF-180 Command Sergeant Major —
Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Carey
Public Affairs Officer —
Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty
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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basic Disney road paving project; since the contractor is here, we're utilizing the opportunity to improve Bagram, making it a little more enjoyable for everybody."

In addition to the gym location, other high traffic areas such as the Dragon DFAC, will also be touched by this extension and are expected to be completed by the end of December, said Wayne.

By the end of January, troops should see construction moving past the North DFAC, he added.

"That's where the new DFAC is going up; the old tent DFAC will come down and there's plans to make that the northern MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) area (with) a gym (and) a shopette," said Wayne.

The new northern addition idea was born to make MWR facilities more easily accessible to troops living on the far north area of base and to take the load off the main PX, said Staff Sgt. Jim Bagnell, FET-28.

Another modification that will be completed within the coming months is a distinct barrier between the walkway and the road that will provide visibility at night.

"What we're trying to do is create a safe walkway for Soldiers, especially as you head north, but because of the force protection

requirements of the Hescos, there's not really a walkway there (which is) why we paved the shoulder up towards the north DFAC," said Wayne. "What we'll do is put in posts that are reflective at night to create a barrier (between) vehicles and pedestrians (providing) a safer walkway during the evening hours.

"We're adding safety features," Wayne simply said.

The team is trying to get as much construction in as possible before the bad weather hits, said Bagnell. "Get Soldiers under hard roofs, get the roadways in, get some administration buildings and warehouses built."

The six-person team out of the Pittsburgh, Pa., is under the direction of team leader Maj. James Bigley, Department of Public Works Director. Bigley, better known as the landlord of Bagram Air Field, leads the crew in completing its one main mission on base; being the master planner and developer for the base while retaining responsibility for all facilities, development and planning.

"FET-28's goal here is to make it slightly better for any soldier that's here," said Wayne. "It's a team effort; we work as a team."

Bagnell credits the group's teamwork as the reason for FET-28's success in Bagram.

"I think that is the key to our success as a team; we work really good together," he said. "Everybody helps everybody."

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Glenn Miller's band. Miller was one of the foremost big-band leaders of the 1930s and 1940s and led the Army Air Forces Band in England during the war. When the group struck up Glenn Miller's version of "American Patrol," the vets cheered. One World War II vet leaned over to his grandson and said, "We lost Glenn Miller over the English Channel."

These veterans understand the meaning of sacrificing for freedom. "Without (the veterans') sacrifices, the world would be a much different place today – a much poorer place," Myers said during his remarks. "For a century America's aviation veterans have bravely explored and expanded the limits of air power."

Myers said that all members of the armed forces today continue that legacy. The chairman said that the longest flight the Wright Brothers took on Dec. 17, 1903 – an 852-foot, 59-second hop – would easily fit inside the Udvar-Hazy Center. "That short flight launched a whole new era," Myers said. "And soon after brave military pioneers with bold visions of what aviation could do to protect America made their mark on history. They made American airpower the most innovative and respected in the world today."

Myers traced the history of military aviation starting in 1908 with Army 1st Lt. Thomas Selfridge becoming the first military pilot. The

lieutenant became the first fatality, too, when the Wright Flyer crashed at Fort Myer, Va.

Two years later, Navy Lt. Eugene Ely became the first man to pilot a plane off a ship, beginning carrier aviation.

Myers spoke of the airmen who took to the skies in borrowed French Nieuports and SPADs during World War I, and American air aces whose names still resound today – Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker and Lt. Frank Luke. He talked of Army Brig. Gen. Billy Mitchell and his insistence that airpower could defend America's coasts. He spoke of the countless innovations made by military aviators in the 1920s and 1930.

He spoke of the coming of age of strategic bombing during World War II and the thousand plane raids on Germany and Japan. He spoke of the coming of age of carrier aviation in the war against Japan. And he spoke of the B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay – now on display at the center – and its historic role in dropping the first atomic bomb.

Myers said the Cold War continued American innovation. He spoke of the Berlin airlift – a battle against the Soviets won solely by airpower – and of American pilots facing the enemy in MiG Alley over Korea.

He spoke of the development of the helicopter and of X-planes breaking the sound barrier and speed records. He spoke of the strategic triad of bombers, ICBMs and submarine-

launched missiles that kept the peace during the long confrontation with the Soviet Union.

In America's first post-Cold War confrontation, American airpower helped liberate Kuwait. "And of course, since 9-11, American aviators have helped secure our skies and turn the tide against organized terrorists across the globe," Myers said. "In Operation Enduring Freedom, ... American Special

Forces embedded with 12th century-style indigenous cavalry (directed) 20th century airplanes where to drop 21st century satellite bombs."

"Today the U.S. military's tradition of innovation and adventure, guts and vision, endures," Myers said. "Soon a new generation of aviation veterans will fly remotely piloted vehicles, hypersonic craft with scramjet engines and aircraft or spacecraft things we can't even imagine now."

This is the progress military aviation has made, the general said. He pointed to the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter on display in the museum and told the veterans that the JSF is an example of the type of craft the next generation will fly. "We've come from the Wright Flyer to this airplane before us," Myers said. "From canvas and hope, to stealth and a little magic. And it's all because brave American military aviators, Americans who risked their life and limb, slipped the surly bonds of Earth risking all to keep America free."



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from SI.com)

Adams helps Arizona roar past Texas

NEW YORK – Lute Olson and Hassan Adams made Arizona’s latest win sound so simple.

“Defensively, I think we created more problems for them than they created for us,” Olson said after his ninth-ranked Wildcats beat No. 6 Texas 91-83 Tuesday night in the Jimmy V Classic.

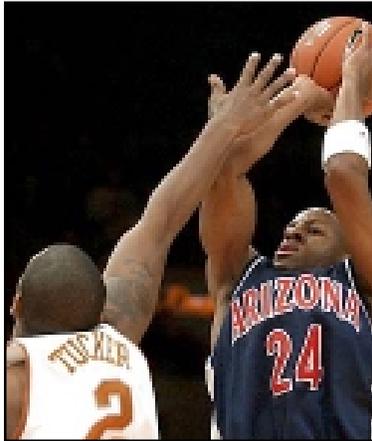
Adams had a career-high 30 points so you would think he would be able to shed some light on his best offensive game.

“I just went out there and played my game. The shots came to me and I took them in rhythm,” he said. “I was feeling it today and I was ready to play.”

Andre Iguodala had a triple-double with 13 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists in the win that kept Arizona unbeaten in nine games in Madison Square Garden under Olson.

The Wildcats (3-1) won the Preseason NIT in 1990, ‘95 and ‘99 under Olson at the Garden and also won the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic there in 2001.

“Our guys came out just right, they weren’t too tense and that’s the way they handle a big game against a big team in a building like Madison Square Garden,” Olson said.



Andre Iguodala had a triple-double with 13 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists.

White named AP Player of the Year

NORMAN, Okla. – Oklahoma quarterback Jason White capped his return from two serious knee injuries by being honored Wednesday as The Associated Press College Player of the Year.

White emerged as the nation’s top-rated passer, leading the third-ranked Sooners to an undefeated regular season and a berth in the Bowl Championship Series title game.

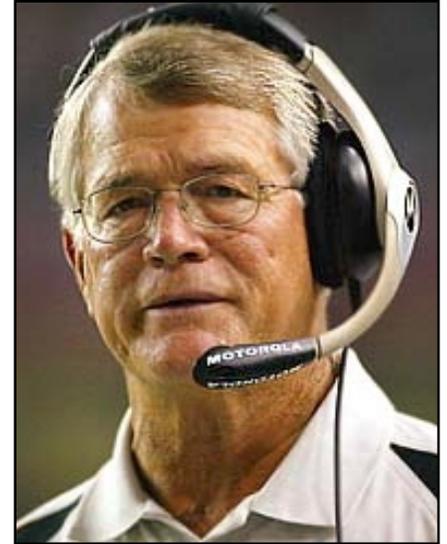
“The last two years, I’ve had a lot of time to grow up,” said White, who was the Big 12 offensive player of the year. “These awards mean more to the team than to any individual. It just shows what kind of a great year that we’ve all had.”

White, one of the leading contenders for the Heisman Trophy, received 27 votes in balloting by 56 members of the AP college football poll board, which includes representatives of newspapers, TV and radio stations. Pittsburgh wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald finished second with 19 votes.

Reeves out as Falcons’ head coach

ATLANTA – The Atlanta Falcons on Wednesday announced that head coach Dan Reeves has been released from his contract effective immediately.

“[Tuesday], I advised Dan that we’ve decided to bring in a new head coach beginning in the 2004 season,” Falcons owner Arthur Blank said. “Dan asked to be released from his position immediately and



Dan Reeves

we agreed to do so, even though our desire was for him to stay on through the rest of the season.”

“We want to begin the process of searching for a new head coach in a thorough and honest manner,” said Blank. “In order to do so, and as Dan and I previously discussed, I wanted to let him know of our decision first.

“This conversation also puts the club in a position to operate in an open and honest environment during the final weeks of the season, and to proceed with our plans for the future.”

Falcons defensive coordinator Wade Phillips, in his second season with the team, was named interim head coach for the remaining three games of the season.

Coach axed after slumping team loses

PHOENIX – Frank Johnson was fired on Wednesday as coach of the Phoenix Suns, a young team with high expectations that is off to an 8-13 start and has lost six of its last seven games.

The Suns promoted lead assistant Mike D’Antoni, a star player and highly successful coach in Italy who coached the Denver Nuggets in the lockout-shortened 1998-99 season.

“There’s been something amiss all year, in my opinion,” Suns owner Jerry Colangelo said. “The more I saw on the floor, the more I disliked what I saw as it related to body language, communication or lack of same.”

D’Antoni, under contract through next season, promised to immediately try to boost the tempo, beginning with the next game Thursday night at home against New Orleans.

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

More terror attacks expected when Afghan assembly meets Saturday

By Pamela Constable

KABUL, Afghanistan (*Washington Post*)—Doing their best to march in step, 2,000 soldiers and former militia fighters paraded past a reviewing stand yesterday after turning in their weapons and listening to speeches about beginning a new civilian life and contributing to their country's reconstruction.

But the ceremony at a National Guard base, designed to highlight a critical, long-awaited step in the demilitarization of this struggling nation, occurred as U.S. military and civilian officials in the region warned that they expect further terrorist attacks as a national constitutional assembly gets underway this week. The meeting, known as a loya jirga, is scheduled to open Saturday.

"Afghans are determined to have the loya jirga, but I anticipate increased efforts by [extremist] forces to disrupt it," U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad told journalists yesterday. Attacks may also take place along the highway from Kabul to Kandahar, which is being rebuilt largely with U.S. funds, he added. "We want to take the offensive against them, to take the war to them."

This week, U.S.-led forces launched a large military operation in eastern Afghanistan near the Pakistani border, where revived Taliban forces and other antigovernment insurgents have been active. Officials have given few details on the operation, other than to say it involves about 2,000 troops, some of whom were flown by helicopter into Khost Province near the border.

A U.S. air assault Saturday aimed at killing a suspected Taliban terrorist in a village in Ghazni Province mistakenly killed nine children, drawing sharp criticism from UN officials. Both Khalilzad and a U.S. military spokesman acknowledged yesterday that the attack may have missed its intended target, whom U.S. officials initially reported killed.

Khalilzad said U.S. military investigators are acting with "a clear sense of urgency" to determine what went wrong in the raid. Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty, the U.S. military spokesman at Bagram air base, attributed the children's deaths to the "fog and friction of war."

Karzai seeks accord on constitution

KABUL, Afghanistan (*Reuters*)—Afghan President Hamid Karzai appealed to delegates to this weekend's Loya Jirga to reach a quick agreement on a new constitution with a strong presidency to guide the country to its first elections next year.

Speaking to reporters at his heavily fortified presidential palace in Kabul Wednesday, Karzai also repeated that he would not stand in future elections if the Loya Jirga, or grand assembly, opted for a prime minister as well as a president. A draft constitution will be presented to delegates at the meeting starting in Kabul Saturday. It calls for a strong presidency with powers critics say border on the dictatorial.

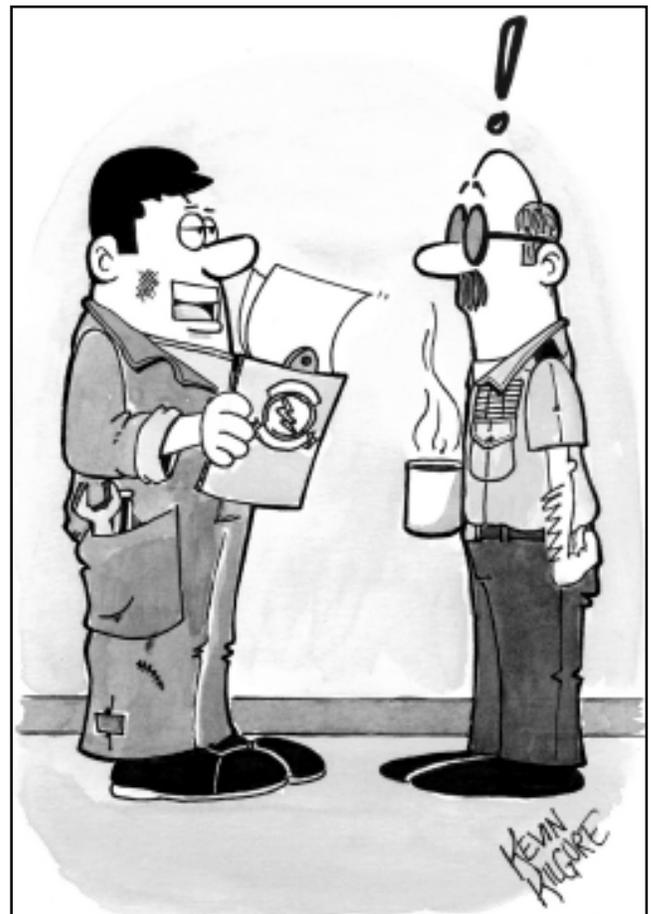
"In countries where there are no strong institutions, where the remnants of conflict are still there, we need a system with one centrality, not many centers of power," Karzai said.

"My wish from Loya Jirga representatives is that they work for national unity, the national benefit, and establish a consolidated national governing regime and stable conditions in the country."

He pointed to the example of Sri Lanka, a country experiencing a feud between the president and prime minister.

The Jamiat-e-Islami faction of powerful Defense Minister Mohammad Qasim Fahim, a rival of Karzai, is keen to see a prime ministerial system with Fahim in the post. Karzai said he would not stand for election if there was such a system.

"Someone in your shop called and said they had a broken E9 or something."



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support