



FREEDOM WATCH



July 28, 2002

Published in the interest of those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom

Bagram, Afghanistan

News briefs

(Compiled from CNN.com)

Bragg killings raise alarm about stress

WASHINGTON—The killings of four military wives in the past six weeks — allegedly by their husbands who are based at Fort Bragg, N.C. — have led commanders to take a new look at whether combat deployments may be causing undue stress. Sources at Fort Bragg, home to the Army Special Operations Command, say there's no common thread among the cases, and suggest it may simply be an "anomaly" that so many incidents have occurred so close together.

House passes homeland security bill

WASHINGTON—The U.S. House of Representatives Friday night passed legislation that would create a Homeland Security Department. The vote, by a margin of 295 to 132, moves the federal government closer to the creation of a large new Cabinet-level

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5 U.S. soldiers wounded in ambush

By Capt. Timothy Beninato
28th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Five U.S. soldiers were wounded Saturday afternoon after being ambushed while conducting a reconnaissance mission about 12 kilometers east of Khowst.

The action lasted several hours and ended at approximately 5:30 p.m. local time, said Col. Roger King, Combined Joint Task Force-180 Public Affairs Officer. Two Afghanistan militia force soldiers and three enemy forces were killed, and one enemy soldier was wounded.

The wounded sol-



Photo by Spc. Alfredo Jimenez Jr.

Emergency medical team personnel rush toward a UH-60 Blackhawk to assist wounded U.S. soldiers Saturday afternoon. Five U.S. service members were wounded after being ambushed in Eastern Khowst.

diers were flown here Saturday afternoon by UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and met by emergency medical teams on the ground. They were then transported by military ambulance to the 339th Combat Support Hospital for treatment.

Early this morning,

two of the U.S. soldiers were flown to the American military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, for further treatment.

U.S. service members were wounded, King said, when they came under enemy small arms fire while reconning a com-

pound where al Qaeda members were believed to be staying.

During the four-hour firefight, U.S. forces called for close air support. Help came in the form of two AH-64 Apache helicopters, two Air Force A-

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63rd RSC commander visits Bagram

By Spc. Alfredo Jimenez Jr.
28th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — After stopping in Khandahar, Maj. Gen. Robert Ostenberg, the 63rd Region Support Command commander,

continued his tour of Afghanistan with a visit to the 339th Combat Support Hospital at Bagram Air Base.

"We have only been here for three days," said Maj. Donald Beckett, 109th Medical Detachment officer-in-charge. "But what a way to begin a deployment by

meeting a general. I am pleased that he came. It reflects that he cares about his troops."

Ostenberg's trip began with a slide show showcasing many life-saving stories. He listened intently as the staff told him about the daily way of life in Bagram. After the presentation,

he toured the 339th CSH area and met every staff member.

The 339th CSH, a Reserve unit from Coraopolis, Pa., is able to provide Level-Three health care — surgery, dental and optometry.

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They even provide anesthesia in the operating room.

“We are unique because we are the first Reservist hospital to deploy here,” said Lt. Col. Donna Hershey, chief nurse. “We pulled everything from the depot and arrived here with new equipment.

Ostenberg ended his visit by presenting coins to Lt. Col. James Post, the 339th's commander, and Capt. Libby Dillon, a staff nurse from West Virginia who takes care of sick children.

“I'm thrilled,” Dillon said. “It's a great honor.”

Before leaving, the general gave the staff words of encouragement.

“You're all doing great team work,” he said.

The 339th CSH, according to Hershey, is always happy to show others what they do and are always willing to do it.

“It was a nice visit,” Hershey said. “We were pleased because he came as the spokesman for the commander of Army Reserve.”



Photo by Spc. Kevin Buckley, 300th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Sgt. 1st Class Brian McNutt and Capt. David Kolodji of the 1980th Med. Det. (Forward Surgical Team), Army Reserve, show Maj. Gen. Robert B. Ostenberg the operating room at Khandahar Airfield. Ostenberg visited Khandahar Wednesday.

Desert camel spiders can spin 'urban legends

By Senior Airman Grace Hall
*379th Expeditionary Medical
Group Public Health*

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (AFPN) — Many people deployed for the war on terrorism have heard of the dreaded camel spider and how this monster-of-a-creature can viciously attack everything in its path.

Stories even exist of camel spiders eating people's flesh in the middle of the night without them noticing until they wake up.

Unfortunately, these “urban legends” are what most people believe. Few actually know what the camel spider is truly like.

The name “camel spider” is not entirely accurate. They are not exactly spiders; they are solifugids – sort of a cross between a spider and a scorpion. They vary in size, between one to six inches, depending on the species, sex or age.

They do not spin webs and most types (more than 500 species) do not have venom. There is one species that may live in the Southwest Asia area that has a type of venom that



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Linas Venclauskas
Camel spiders are common throughout Southwest Asia and can be found almost anywhere. This camel spider was a stowaway on a recent C-130 Hercules mission into Afghanistan.

causes temporary paralysis in the victim. All species have four pincer-like jaws used for crushing prey. The main risks presented by camel spider bites are shock or infection.

Despite their fearsome appearance and strong bite, camel spiders are unlikely to harm humans. Generally, they prefer to stay away from people. So, they are not likely to make a meal out of someone; however, if they are backed into a corner or feel threatened, they will aggressively fight back.

Although they only use three of their four pairs of legs for running, camel spiders are one of the fastest running arthropods and can reach speeds up to 10 miles per hour. They rely on this speed to catch prey.

Oftentimes, people only catch a glimpse of the camel spider as it dashes across the desert floor in search of food. They feed on other spiders, scorpions, lizards, mice and some small birds. Once they have caught their prey, they use their crushing jaws to kill it.

Camel spiders are nocturnal predators coming out primarily

at night in search of food. They are attracted to light and will appear most frequently on roads or paths. During the day, camel spiders spend most of their time hiding in burrows or under objects looking for shade.

When they do come out during the day, camel spiders avoid the heat by running from shadow to shadow, even if it belongs to a human. If a camel spider runs toward a person's shadow and he or she tries to run away, the spider will chase the shadow. So, it appears to be chasing people when it is actually not.

If you see a camel spider, do not try to get rid of it yourself, said officials with 379th Expeditionary Medical Group public health section at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. The spider will move on its own; camel spiders do not spend much time in one place.

Chemicals such as bug sprays are not recommended, as they most likely will do nothing but make the spider angry, said officials.

Officials also warn against trying to capture a camel spider to serve as a pet or mascot. Avoidance is the key.

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FIGHT, from Page 1

10 Warthogs and two Navy FA-18 Hornets. The FA-18s engaged enemy forces with four MK82 bombs while the AH-64s and A10s attacked targets with machine gun and rocket fire. Afghanistan and Coalition forces continue to conduct combat operations in Afghanistan to isolate and destroy al Qaeda and Taliban forces and to deny them sanctuary, King said. The wounded soldiers' names are being withheld pending next-of-kin notification.

agency that would take over responsibilities related to national security that are now spread out over 22 other agencies and a range of other departments.

Australia defends torture vote

SYDNEY, Australia — The Australian government has defended its decision not to sign a United Nations protocol on torture, instead joining the minority non-signatory group of countries with notorious human rights records. Australia sided with eight other countries including China, Cuba, Libya and Sudan by voting against the draft protocol which calls for independent visits to prisons as a way of halting torture. The U.S. abstained.

Pope speaks to ‘Catholic Woodstock’

TORONTO, Canada — Thousands of pilgrims attending World Youth Day Thursday exultantly greeted Pope John Paul II, who told the flock to be peacemakers in the face of terrorist threats. The 82-year-old pontiff, frail but alert on the 97th trip of his papacy, waved to the faithful from the “popemobile,” which headed slowly to Exhibition Place on Lake Ontario for the papal welcoming ceremony at the annual event, regarded as kind of a “Catholic Woodstock.”

TSP briefing:

A Thrift Savings Program briefing will be today at 0530 and 0930 (Zulu), at the Viper City Dining Facility.

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER REPORT:

| | <i>Today</i> | <i>Monday</i> |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Bagram: | <i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 97F L: 68F | <i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 99F L: 66F |
| Khandahar: | <i>Dusty</i> H: 108F L: 70F | <i>Dusty</i> H: 108F L: 70F |
| Kabul: | <i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 91F L: 63F | <i>Dusty</i> H: 93F L: 63F |
| Uzbekistan: | <i>Clear</i> H: 105F L: 67F | <i>Clear</i> H: 105F L: 67F |

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

FREEDOM WATCH

Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Combined Joint Task Force - 180.

- ❖ CJTF - 180 Commanding General — Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill
- ❖ CJTF - 180 Command Sergeant Major — Command Sgt. Maj. Steven R. England
- ❖ Public Affairs Officer — Col. Roger King
- ❖ Public Affairs Sergeant Major — Sgt. Maj. C.J. Costello

Freedom Watch, an Army newspaper publication, is produced by the 28th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

- ❖ Commander — Capt. Timothy Beninato
- ❖ NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Rhonda M. Lawson
- ❖ Editor — Sgt. Reeba Critser
- ❖ Sports Editor — Spc. Alfredo Jimenez Jr.
- ❖ Journalists — Spc. Jason Allgood, Spc. Erica Leigh Foley, Pfc. Nathan Akridge and Pfc. Eleazar Craig.

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas. Contents of *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

All submissions are subject to editing for size and content by the 28th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Motel 6, CJTF - 180, Bagram Air Base.

To be added to the daily distribution list, e-mail reeba.critser@us.army.mil

Visit the CENTCOM Website to see the latest editions of *Freedom Watch* at www.centcom.mil/operations/CJTF%20180/cjtf180.htm

COALITION

SPORTSZONE

The Day in Sports

(Compiled from ESPN.com)

Vaughn singles in game-winning run; Mets tie Reds in wild-card race

NEW YORK — Mo Vaughn singled in the winning run with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning to give the New York Mets a 3-2 win over the Cincinnati Reds on Friday night.

After Vaughn sent John Riedling's first pitch back up the middle, Rey Ordonez ran home with his hands in the air as the screaming Merengue Night crowd made Shea Stadium shake.

The win gave the Mets and the Reds identical 53-49 records as they chased the NL's wild card spot.

Ordonez led off the ninth with a single. Pinch-hitter Marco Scutaro advanced him with a sacrifice bunt and Roberto Alomar was intentionally walked.

Timo Perez grounded into a fielder's choice — avoiding the double play — and Mike Piazza walked to load the bases and bring up Vaughn.

Riedling (4-1) had no place to put Vaughn, who entered the game batting .278 with runners in scoring position.

Mets reliever Mark Guthrie (5-0), who extended his scoreless streak to 25 1/3 innings, hit Ken Griffey Jr. in the batting helmet with a pitch in the eighth.

The ball struck with an audible crack. Trainers rushed onto the field, helped Griffey to his feet, and he went to first base as fans cheered.

Griffey, who had been booed before each of his at-bats, was later caught in a rundown after Guthrie's pickoff throw to end the inning.

Alomar began the night with his 2,500th career hit in the first inning and went 3-for-3, but the Mets gave up a 2-0 lead in the sixth inning.

Leaf ends horrific career, retires from NFL

CHENEY, Wash. — When Ryan Leaf didn't show up for the Seattle Seahawks' quarterbacks meeting, Trent Dilfer figured something must be wrong.

As the starter and leader, Dilfer immediately called Leaf in the scenic town of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, on Thursday night and learned of his plans to retire from the NFL.

The decision, confirmed by the Seahawks on Friday, ends a career that began in 1998 when he was the No. 2 overall draft pick and considered one of the NFL's most promising young quarterbacks.

"He seems at peace with it," Dilfer said. "This isn't a profession you should make a decision on what other people say. ... I was surprised. I thought he had very productive minicamps and was learning and had turned a page in his career and was building back up."

Leaf did not report to camp Thursday, when quarterbacks were due at the team's facility at Eastern Washington University. His wife, Niki, told The Associated Press that Leaf did not want to talk about the decision.

She declined to discuss his future plans.

Team spokesman Dave Pearson said on Friday that Leaf — who fizzled in San Diego, Tampa Bay and Dallas — told the Seahawks he is quitting. Chargers safety Rodney Harrison, a frequent critic of Leaf, wasn't surprised.

2002 Major League standings

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|------|-----------|
| American League East | | | | GB |
| N.Y. Yankees | 63-37 | .630 | - | |
| Boston | 59-42 | .584 | 4.5 | |
| Baltimore | 48-51 | .485 | 14.5 | |
| American League Central | | | | GB |
| Minnesota | 61-42 | .592 | - | |
| Chicago (AL) | 47-56 | .456 | 14 | |
| Cleveland | 44-57 | .436 | 16 | |
| American League West | | | | GB |
| Seattle | 62-40 | .608 | - | |
| Anaheim | 60-40 | .600 | 1 | |
| Oakland | 59-43 | .578 | 3 | |
| National League East | | | | GB |
| Atlanta | 66-36 | .647 | - | |
| N.Y. Mets | 53-49 | .520 | 13 | |
| Florida | 50-52 | .490 | 16 | |
| National League Central | | | | GB |
| St. Louis | 57-43 | .570 | - | |
| Cincinnati | 53-49 | .520 | 5 | |
| Houston | 51-51 | .495 | 7 | |
| National League West | | | | GB |
| Arizona | 61-41 | .598 | - | |
| San Francisco | 57-45 | .559 | 4 | |
| Los Angeles | 57-45 | .559 | 4 | |

Friday's scores

| |
|--|
| Baltimore 9-2 Detroit |
| Detroit 8-5 Cleveland |
| Montreal 6-5 Florida, 10 inn. |
| NY Mets 3-2 Cincinnati |
| NY Yankees 12-9 Tampa Bay |
| Philadelphia 3-2 Atlanta |
| Chicago W. Sox 10-2 Kansas City, Btm 7th |
| Milwaukee 7-3 Colorado, Top 8th |
| Minnesota 9-5 Toronto, Btm 7th |
| Houston 4-3 Pittsburgh |
| Texas 7-4 Oakland, Btm 7th |
| St. Louis 8-4 Chicago Cubs |
| Seattle 0-0 Anaheim, Btm 3rd |
| Arizona 5-0 San Diego, Btm 2nd |
| Los Angeles 3-0 San Francisco, Btm 1st |

Today's schedule

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Baltimore at Boston |
| Detroit at Cleveland |
| Florida at Montreal |
| Cincinnati at NY Mets |
| NY Yankees at Tampa Bay |
| Philadelphia at Atlanta |
| Kansas City at Chicago W. Sox |
| Colorado at Milwaukee |
| Toronto at Minnesota |
| Oakland at Texas |
| Pittsburgh at Houston |