

## Refurbishment project restores hope in Kabul

Story by Staff Sgt. Cynthia A. Hernandez  
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**KABUL, Afghanistan** – A ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the refurbishment of the Incumbency of Metal Elements Production Building was held here Aug. 27.

The facility supports the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and the Environment and it a valuable resource to Afghanistan because it helps develop irrigation systems and sustainable water resources throughout the country.

This is the only national metal manufacturing plant in Afghanistan. The plant employs approximately 107 and it produces a range of materials to build metal trusses and water storage tanks.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Williams

*Alhaj Muhammad Akbar Barukzai and Col. David E. Gray, CJCMOTF, cut the ribbon official opening the Incumbency of Metal Elements Production Building Aug. 27.*

See **REFURBISH**, Page 4

## Bagram sees better days with BOSS

Story by Sgt. Greg Heath  
4<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** – On Monday, Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers (BOSS) introduced itself to the Bagram community with a Labor Day “Cookout Bash” during lunchtime in front of the Post Exchange.

BOSS is an Army program that supports the overall quality of life for single soldiers and married soldiers separated from their spouses, which includes practically every soldier on the base, according to Bagram BOSS president Sgt. Antonio Murrell, Logistical Task Force 129.

At the cookout, BOSS, along with volunteers from the PX, treated any passers-by to barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs and ice-cold sodas, all the while informing soldiers and service members of what BOSS could do for them.

Murrell, who is also the BOSS President at Fort Bragg, N.C., said there is a just as great a need for a BOSS program in a deployed environment as there is at a home station.

One of the main functions Murrell hopes BOSS can do for soldiers is to encourage and assists single soldiers in identifying and planning activities they want to do.

“We want a way to better assess what the soldiers want here,” said Murrell. “I

want to put out suggestion boxes to see what soldiers want to do, so soldiers have more say about what things are planned.”

Murrell also plans to partner up with different organizations like the PX and Morale, Welfare and Recreation to organize bigger events.

For the Labor Day barbeque, the PX enthusiastically offered a helping hand, contributing supplies, space and cooks from their crew.

“It makes us happy to take care of you guys,” said PX employee Frank Rosato.

Bagram PX manager Maria Schizas-Price was quick to add that the PX plans to offer continued support to BOSS for events.

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# World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



*Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat says the United States has not done enough to keep the peace plan alive.*

## Arafat: 'The road map is dead'

**JERUSALEM** – Recent Israeli military action against Palestinian militants has killed the U.S.-backed Mideast “road map” to peace, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Tuesday.

His statement in an off-camera interview with *CNN* came as Israel’s defense minister left open the possibility that Israel might move to expel Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president.

Arafat said there was no prospect of Palestinian militant groups such as Hamas resuming a declared cease-fire with Israel.

“The road map is dead, but only because of Israeli military aggression in recent weeks,” he said. The interview took place in Ramallah in the West Bank.

Arafat said the United States has not done enough to keep the peace plan alive, suggesting that the U.S. commitment in Iraq or the next year’s presidential election are preoccupying the Bush administration.

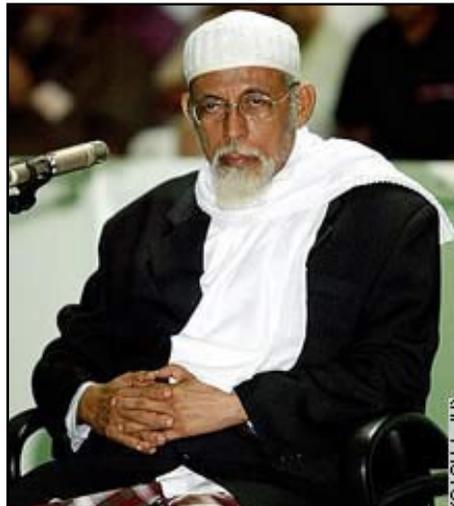
He downplayed a reported split between himself and Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, saying the reports have been exaggerated by Israel in order to create problems within the Palestinian leadership.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said Israel made a historic mistake by not expelling Arafat two years ago, and left open the possibility Israel might take such action soon.

In an interview with Israel Army Radio,

Mofaz said Arafat was an obstacle to Abbas and his attempts to implement the road map.

“Arafat never wanted to reach an agreement with us. I believe that he needs to disappear from the stage of history,” Mofaz said.



*The Jakarta court ruled there was no evidence Ba'asyir led a regional terror network.*

## Ba'asyir jailed for four years

**JAKARTA**, Indonesia – Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has been sentenced to four years in jail for his involvement in a plot to topple the Indonesian government.

However, passing its verdict in the cleric’s treason trial a court in Jakarta ruled there was no evidence Ba'asyir was the leader of that plot or the leader of a regional terrorist network.

The sentence is considerably less than the 15 years prosecutors has sought during the trial — the maximum possible would have been a life term.

After working through more than 200 pages of evidence, chief judge Muhammad Saleh said Ba'asyir was guilty of taking part in subversion and forgery, but there was no proof he was the leader of the shadowy Southeast Asian terror network Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

“In order that the defendant does not repeat his mistake ... he must be punished,” Saleh said. “We, the judges, hand down a sentence of four years in prison.”

Speaking after the sentence had been passed Ba'asyir told the court and his supporters that he did not accept the verdict and planned to appeal.



*A guard stands on the wall of the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf on Tuesday as thousands of Shiite Muslims gathered to mourn the death of the Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim.*

## Four deadly car bombs in 4 weeks

**BAGHDAD**, Iraq – The fourth car bombing in Iraq in a month killed a police station employee Tuesday and wounded at least 18 other people near the station in western Baghdad.

The attack occurred as Shiite Muslims gathered in Najaf to mourn the death of Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim. Hakim, a longtime Iraqi dissident, was among at least 83 people killed in Friday’s bombing of a mosque in that south-central Iraq city.

More than 120 people have died in the four assaults, each of which has targeted those cooperating to at least some extent with the U.S.-backed Coalition Provisional Authority.

In addition to the bombings at the Baghdad police station and Najaf mosque, 17 people were killed in the August 7 bombing at the Jordanian Embassy in the Iraqi capital and the August 19 attack at U.N. headquarters in Baghdad killed 22 people.

A police official said the facility was largely protected from the blast by a wall separating it from the parking lot, where the car exploded.

A U.S. military official described the dead man as police personnel but could not confirm if he was an officer.

In other violence, two U.S. military police officers died and one was wounded Monday after their Humvee hit a bomb on a highway in southern Baghdad, U.S. Central Command said Tuesday.

# EOD destroys ordnance found in Gardez cache

Story and photo by Pfc. Kelly Hunt  
4<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**GARDEZ**, Afghanistan – Explosive Ordnance Disposal team members destroyed a portion of weapons found in a local cache Aug. 21 helping to eliminate the threat of violence within the area.

More than 6,000 pounds of captured ordnance blew up in smoke with the help of EOD personnel and Afghan National Army soldiers during the day's operation designed to help clear out six rooms full of ordnance discovered in a castle.

"There's six of them, just stock piled with ordnance," said Staff Sgt. Chuck Gross, 704<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company (EOD), team leader.

Hundreds of thousands of hazardous weapons occupy the castle and EOD personnel are destroying it by the truck-load.

"We're hauling it out in jingle trucks and blowing it up when we can," said Gross. "We're trying to get rid of anything that (terrorists) can use to hurt us."

By denying terrorists the opportunity to use these weapons, we'll be making the area safer for all involved, he said.

"If they don't have missiles, they're pretty much down to throwing rocks," he said.

The crew is beginning with the high explosive ordnance to lower the threat it poses on the area.

"We're going to get rid of that because that's the biggest threat to us and the local population and then we're going to work down to the small arms," said Gross.

The amount of ordnance housed within the castle isn't exact, but the estimate is twenty trucks loads.

"(But) I think that's low," he said. "I think it's in the range of twenty to thirty."

The people of the community are excited to see the weapons leave the center of their town, Gross added.

The threat is real to the local population. If the caches



*More than 6,000 pounds of ordnance was destroyed by Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel with the help of Afghan National Army troops in the Gardez area.*

blow up, "it would kill everyone within (the area) and they don't want that," said Gross. "Local authorities want us to get rid of it."

The day was a success, said Gross. "Any day we get rid of this stuff, nobody gets hurt and the ordnance goes away, is a good day."

The mission went smoothly partly do to the efforts made from the ANA troops, he said. "The coordination between us and the ANA went really well."

## **BOSS**, from Page 1

Soldier from LTF 129 also volunteered their help during the first BOSS function.

One of the volunteers, Pfc. Elena Rangel, LTF 129, looks forward to meeting new faces through the BOSS program.

"I want to see more social events that bring soldiers together, that would

be really cool," Rangel said.

Murrell said he hopes other aspects of BOSS, like bringing soldiers together for community service events, can also be incorporated into the Bagram program.

"We can get soldier volunteers to help schools in the Bagram area," Murrell said.

Murrell is optimistic about the potential

of the BOSS program at Bagram, but he stressed that soldiers make or break the program.

"Participation is key, just come out," Murrell said. "I just want soldiers to have fun."

For more information about the Bagram BOSS program or to submit ideas call BOSS president Sgt. Antonyo Murrell at 318-231-4648

**REFURBISH**, from Page 1

"It is an honor for me to be here today on behalf of United States Army, your partner in the reconstruction of this facility," said Col. David Gray, the Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF) representative. "This renovation has significantly improved the working environment and more importantly, allows metal fabrication manufacturing to continue year-round."

The project included replacing large multi-pane window frames, doors and repairing the roof as well as filling holes to interior and exterior walls caused by rocket fragments.

The estimated cost of the reconstruction was \$41,000.

"The (Afghanistan) government is focused on rebuilding the infrastructure to improve the quality of life of its people, promote stability and raise the country's standing in the international community," said Gray.

"The process to repair this facility is significant as it reflects the efficient workings of the new government."

The refurbishment project is vital because it will enable the Afghans to become self-sufficient in food production through increased water irrigation. It will also provide a good working environment for the workers employed at the facility.

"The reconstruction and refurbishment helps productivity and is a good income for workers," said Dr. Mohammed Yosuf Noorustani, of the Minister of Irrigation, Water Resources and the Environment. "It also provides good conditions and [a good] environment which is important for the workers."

The reconstruction was completed by the Noor Bakshi Constructional Company and made possible through the cooperation of the Islamic Transitional Government of Afghanistan and the CJCMOTF.

The project was another step forward for the Afghan government and the Afghan people, said officials close to the project.

## Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "The Bourne Identity." A man washes ashore, bullet-riddled and without memory, then races to elude assassins and recover from amnesia.

Tomorrow's movie will be "K19 Widowmaker."



## Local weather

### TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Thursday</i>
<b>Bagram:</b>	<i>Mostly clear</i> H: 95F L: 59F	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 95F L: 59F
<b>Kandahar:</b>	<i>Dusty</i> H: 99F L: 68F	<i>Dusty</i> H: 99F L: 68F
<b>Kabul:</b>	<i>Dusty</i> H: 95F L: 57F	<i>Dusty</i> H: 93F L: 57F
<b>Uzbekistan:</b>	<i>Clear</i> H: 99F L: 60F	<i>Clear</i> H: 98F L: 59F

*Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team*

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# Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)

## Change of heart, Clarett pulled from practice

COLUMBUS, Ohio – In an abrupt reversal from 10 days ago, Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said on Tuesday that star running back Maurice Clarett will not be allowed to practice with the team until questions about his eligibility are answered.



*Maurice Clarett had been impersonating opposing running backs on the OSU scout team since joining practice with the team.*

For the first time, Tressel said Clarett would miss much of the season.

“It appears ... the suspension is going to be significant. It’s going to be long,” Tressel said.

Tressel and Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger said on Aug. 22 that Clarett was suspended. But they also said he would be permitted to practice with the defending national champions while the NCAA and an Ohio State panel looked into off-the-field problems and charges of academic fraud.

The sophomore tailback watched Saturday night’s 28-9 victory over Washington while standing on the team bench, frequently waving a towel to incite the crowd.

Just before that game, Geiger said Clarett was suspended for multiple games because he misled investigators, a violation of NCAA Bylaw 10 that deals with ethical behavior by student-athletes.

Ohio State officials are currently in the process of responding to several pages of NCAA allegations dealing with Clarett.

Clarett set Ohio State freshman records by rushing for 1,237 yards and scoring 18 touchdowns last season as the Buckeyes went 14-0.

Clarett practiced with the team last week, wearing a Washington jersey and mimicking Huskies’ running back Rich Alexis while running plays against Ohio State’s first-team defense.

He did not work out with the team during preseason camp because of the probes.

Tressel was asked near the end of his weekly news conference Tuesday if the tailback’s status as scout-team running back would change this week.

“I think we need to make some progress in that situation. I am disappointed that we haven’t because those questions loom,” Tressel said. “It appears to me — without having seen anything official or any black-and-white indications — that the suspension is going to be significant. It’s going to be long.”

## Sosa pulls Cubs within half-game of Cardinals with 15 inning heroics

CHICAGO – Feeling a bit weary after playing 15 innings, Sammy Sosa found a way to get some rest.

He hit a two-run homer in the bottom half, sending the Chicago Cubs to their clubhouse with a 4-2 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals in the first game of a day-night double-header Tuesday.



Sammy Sosa

“My goodness. I think it was one of the longest games we’ve played,” Sosa said after hitting his 32nd home run to end the 4 hour, 47 minute game. It was his ninth career game-winning homer, seven with the Cubs.

“I was 0-for-5 and I never gave in. I went up there, I got one pitch to hit and that was everything,” Sosa said. “After you play 15 innings, I don’t think you have any energy left. But that was a big one for the team. We played so hard to be where we are.”

Sosa’s long homer off former teammate Jeff Fassero brought the Cubs within a half-game of the second-place Cardinals. Houston, which was tied with St. Louis for first entering play Tuesday, played a late game at Los Angeles.

With one out in the 15th inning, Sosa connected on an 0-2 pitch.

“That’s a heartbreaker,” Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said. “There were a lot of heroic moments. We were close to winning a couple of times, but couldn’t pull it off. That’s a tough loss.”

## Seahawks tackle sign one-year deal

ESPN – Offensive tackle Walter Jones, one of the premier pass protectors in the league and designated by the Seattle Seahawks as their “franchise” player, ended his holdout and reported to the team Tuesday afternoon.



Walter Jones

Jones, 29, will sign the one-year qualifying offer for a “franchise” offensive lineman, which is worth \$5.904 million.

As of early afternoon, Jones had not yet informed the team of his decision to end his holdout, but sources close to the six-year veteran said he is en route to camp. Jones has missed all of training camp, as he did a year ago, when he also balked at the “franchise” designation.

“It’s just too much guaranteed money to turn down,” agent Roosevelt Barnes said of the qualifying offer. “And \$350,000 a week, which he would forfeit if he continues to sit, well, that’s a lot of money, too.”

The two sides have been attempting for months to negotiate a contract but have never come close to consummating a deal. Jones wants to be among the highest-paid blockers in the game and Seahawks officials say they have made offers commensurate to that.

Negotiations broke off two weeks ago, with the Seahawks saying that Jones would play for the qualifying offer or not at all.

# Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

## Taliban sending 300 more fighters in to battle

**SPIN BOLDAK**, Afghanistan, (*Reuters*) — Afghanistan's Taliban has sent 300 more fighters to the southern province of Zabol to help battle Afghan government and U.S.-led troops, a commander from the ousted militia said on Tuesday.

Maulvi Faizullah, a senior Taliban commander involved in fighting in Zabol, said a fresh wave of militants had been deployed in Dai Chopan district to join up to 1,000 others who have been fighting in the area for the last eight days.

The reinforcements were being led by former Taliban Education Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, Faizullah told *Reuters*. They had been sent from Khost province in the east bordering Pakistan, he said.

Zabol provincial intelligence chief Khalil Hotak said Afghan government forces backed by U.S.-led troops were searching in the Koh Larzab area of Dai Chopan, where he said Taliban militants were believed to be hiding in caves.

There were no air attacks from U.S. and allied jet fighters and helicopter gunships early on Tuesday and no direct contact with the Taliban fighters, he added.

According to a U.S. military spokesman, soldiers from the 20-nation force hunting remnants of the Taliban and al Qaeda network of Osama bin Laden clashed with small enemy units of five to 10 men on Tuesday and trapped one group in a cave.

Suspected Taliban guerrillas and their supporters, who the U.S. military says have been scattered, are using small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades against U.S.-led troops and their Afghan allies.

The Taliban has declared a "jihad," or holy war against foreign forces, aid organisations and allies in Afghanistan. Afghan policemen, soldiers and aid workers have borne the brunt of the attacks, with Taliban officials calling them spies for foreign organisations or supporters of the United States and the U.S.-backed government in Kabul.

The battle in Zabol helped make August the bloodiest month since the Taliban was toppled from power by U.S. air power and Afghan ground forces in late 2001.

Afghan officials and commanders say more than 90 Taliban fighters have been killed, most of them in air raids, while the Taliban say its losses are far lower. The U.S. military has reported at least 37 Taliban losses in the Zabol fighting.

There were no fresh casualties reported by either side on Tuesday.

A U.S. embassy spokesman in Kabul said resurfacing work on a highway from Kabul to the southern city of Kandahar was continuing despite a string of recent killings along the road.

Early on Monday four policemen were killed, four were wounded and four went missing after a raid on their checkpoint 180 km (115 miles) northeast of Kandahar in Zabol province.

Indian contractors working for U.S. company Louis Berger Group Inc. came under small-arms fire in a guest house nearby. In a

separate attack, two of the company's security guards were shot dead when assailants opened fire on their vehicle.

Two more attacks were carried out late on Sunday or early on Monday in Zabol and the neighbouring Uruzgan province, taking to 11 the number of people killed in the area.

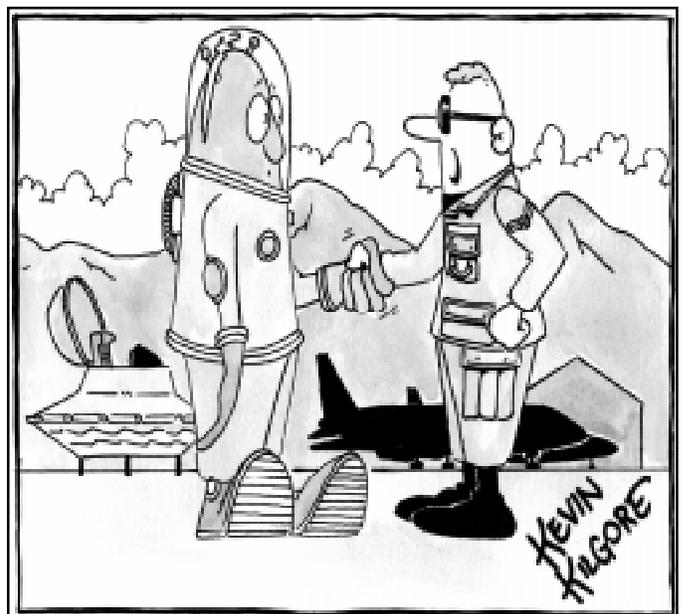
The highway is the largest reconstruction project in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001.

## German Cabinet Agrees to extend Afghan Mission

(*Deutsche Welle - Germany*) - Germany's cabinet agreed on Tuesday to extending its peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan beyond the capital Kabul, if the United Nations votes to expand its mandate there. German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder said last week the government was willing to approve sending an additional 230 soldiers to the northern town of Kunduz.

Germany now has about 2,000 troops on the ground in Afghanistan. The U.S.-backed Afghan government and the United Nations have called for troops from the 5,000-strong International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to be deployed outside Kabul, but lawlessness and factional fighting have made the situation in the provinces extremely dangerous. Germany's lower house of parliament, the Bundestag, will still have to approve the deployment. The mission in Kunduz would support reconstruction efforts and help prepare for elections next year.

**"You must be from the 310th Space Group."**



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By Kevin Kilgore

**Laugh Support**