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POL-E-CHARKI, Afghanistan — On the heels of a highly-successful mission in the South, the 600-person battalion from the 201st Corps, led by Lt. Col. Muhammad Farid Ahmadi, returned to the news that they were identified as the first battalion in the Afghan National Army to undergo commando unit training.

Selection of this battalion did not surprise anyone. Ahmadi's battalion was selected over all others because of its high morale and unparalleled esprit de corps.

An important part of developing commando capability is training NCOs who can then go back and

train others. Each of the five corps in the ANA will eventually have a commando unit assigned, and the 201st Corps soldiers will be the ones training those units.

Shortly after returning from their mission in the South, the soldiers were immersed not in a battle with the enemy, but in a competition among themselves. They were evaluated on marksmanship, a timed three-mile run, push-ups, sit-ups, and a rucksack foot-march in full battle gear. When the dust cleared, 100 highly-motivated soldiers were selected to receive specialized training.

"I think this is a good recognition ... that they have recognized me and my battalion," said Lt. Col.

Ahmadi. "I am very proud."

His soldiers are equally proud and happy to be a part of the battalion.

"He's a very good commander; he's professional," said Capt. Sayed Naser. "Since he's been assigned here, there have been positive changes, from physical training to education to professionalism. There is a great positive change. In all the battalion, from privates to NCOs to officers, they are happy with him and his leadership."

The soldiers selected are scheduled to receive specialized training in Jordan for six months and expectations are high.

"With this new training, good equipment, and designation as com-

mando battalion, we will play a greater role in the future and the stability and security of the region," said Lt. Col. Ahmadi. "When there is security there will be reconstruction. This will lead to good diplomatic relations with the international community as a sound and healthy member. Reconstruction, economy, education, road building, all these things depend on security, and this battalion will play its role in that." 



Courtesy Photo

Soldiers do push-ups trying to make the cut and be in the top 100. Those soldiers would go on to get specialized training in Jordan and return as instructors.