



## Coalition, ANSF declare victory in Helmand

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** –

Afghan National Security Forces from the 205th Corps, under the leadership of Afghan National Army Brig. Gen. Muyaiden, raised the Afghan national flag high above the Musa Qala District Center Dec. 12, as part of the largest operation in years to remove insurgents from Musa Qala, Helmand Province, Dec. 5 - 12.

The fighting began Dec. 5 when ANSF Kandaks, advised by coalition forces, conducted a reconnaissance patrol in Now Zad. Taliban insurgents attempted to stop the ANSF-led troops by firing from established fighting positions using small-arms, rockets and mortar fire. ANSF returned fire with small-arms and machine gun fire, quickly putting the Taliban on the defensive.

The Taliban moved to different fighting positions in an attempt to flank friendly forces as the battle escalated. ANSF identified the enemy's hardened fighting positions and engaged them by calling in precision munitions strikes. When the enemy realized their defensive fighting positions were be-

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photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Wollenberg

### Three state governors visit Camp Eggers

**CAMP EGGERS, Afghanistan** — South Dakota Governor Mike Rounds visits with troops from his state during breakfast Dec. 14 at the Goat Dining Facility here. Governor Rounds, along with Governor Bill Ritter Jr. of Colorado and Governor Donald Carcieri of Rhode Island, spent the morning with constituents and toured Camp Eggers.

## 203rd ANA Corps medics compete in Best Medic contest

by Sgt. 1st Class Gerard A. Du Bois  
ETT mentor

**CAMP CLARK, Afghanistan** – The 203rd Afghan National Army Corps' 1st Brigade medics recently competed in a grueling contest to see who would be dubbed "the best medic."

The competition, a first of its kind for the 203rd ANA Corps, was planned and coordinated by the medical embedded training team trainers and mentors assigned to the

Afghan Regional Security Integration Command – East.

The competition consisted of an oral and/or written exam of 10 questions that tested the soldiers' basic medical knowledge; a weapons station, where soldiers were required to clear, disassemble and reassemble an AK-47, and perform a function check on the weapon all within three minutes; a communication station that tested the soldiers' ability to properly assemble and operate

a tactical communications radio; a medical station that required the soldier to treat and evacuate a casualty and finally, a 9-mile road march for time.

One of the planners involved in the competition was Sgt. 1st Class Harry C. Cleveland, a medical ETT mentor from Brooklyn, N.Y.

"My goal was to challenge, them mentally, technically and physically."

This year's winner of the first

203rd ANA Corps Best Medic Competition was Abdullah Maten of the 4th Kandak (ANA battalion), 1st Brigade.

"This training event is one that could easily grow and expand country-wide," said Maj. Scott Stokoe, 1st Brigade medical mentor.

"The ANA have already been asking about the next time this will be conducted and have ideas of their own as far as how it could be improved."

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ing destroyed, they radioed for reinforcements from positions south of the fighting.

The Taliban tried to take refuge in local villagers' homes and use the remaining civilians as protection as the ANA advanced.

"The enemy attempted to take advantage of the Pashtu code of hospitality by using civilian homes as fighting positions," Muyaiden explained. "The villagers recognized the Taliban were abusing the code and refused. It is a testament to their courage and resolve to help end this conflict quickly."

Concurrently, coalition forces identified a prominent Taliban leader providing instructions to a large number of insurgents. ANSF quickly maneuvered to engage the insurgents by first using small-arms and machine gun fire, then calling in precision munitions, ultimately destroying the enemy.

After a short consolidation and reorganization of men and munitions, the ANSF-led force resumed their effort to drive out the Taliban.

"With the first phases of the operation complete, it is safe to say that our training and preparation have proven successful," Muyaiden stated.

The Taliban continue to make false claims on the Internet about the battle in

Musa Qala. In one report, the Taliban claimed to have killed several coalition forces and captured two abandoned tanks in the Musa Qala District of Helmand Province. They also claimed to have captured large amounts of ammunition and military equipment.

Another Internet posting claims coalition forces dropped leaflets telling Afghan civilians to leave their homes or coalition bombs would destroy them.

"These claims couldn't be farther from the truth," said Army Maj. Chris Belcher, Combined Joint Task Force-82 spokesman. "The leaflets requested residents of Musa Qala stay safely in their homes during the operation and said the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan would defeat the insurgents. We know the Taliban set up fighting positions in civilian homes. We also found suicide vests, improvised explosive device-making materials and stockpiles of munitions stored in civilian homes. However, we have a standing policy to mitigate damage to civilian property."

ANA soldiers from the 205th Corps, assisted by coalition forces, successfully secured the center of Musa Qala after several days of fighting.

## 218th BCT celebrates Army National Guard birthday



photo by Sgt. 1st Class James Downen

**A color guard team posts the colors during a ceremony commemorating the 371st birthday of the Army National Guard Dec. 14 in Patriot Square at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. Service members from the Army and Navy, along with French and Romanian coalition partners, participated. Brig. Gen. Robert E. Livingston, Jr., commander, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VI, closed the ceremony by saying, "The Guard is the heart of America. Thank you for your service and happy birthday."**



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### Mission Statement

The mission of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community, is to plan, program and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders.