

RETURNING TO COMBAT: WOUNDED WARRIOR

FREEDOM WATCH

AFGHANISTAN

Nov. 10, 2008



Afghan sick call

Emergency aid in the mountains, pg. 8

from the kids



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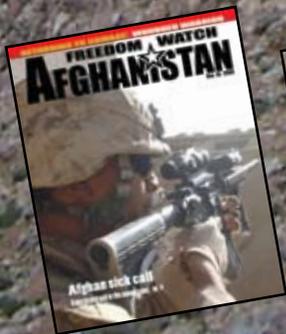
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(Bottom left) Petty Officer 3rd Class Edwin Daniel, Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provides cover on a roof top during a clearing operation in Zad, Afghanistan. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Freddy Cantu)



(Top right) See unit spotlight on back cover. To submit your unit, email freedomwatch@swa.army.mil

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Militants killed

Coalition forces, patrolling in Ghazni province, killed an unknown number of armed militants after a patrol came under heavy fire.



The force, conducting a patrol in Qara Bagh District, came into contact with dozens of armed militants firing from fortified fighting positions.

Without provocation, the anti-Afghan insurgents engaged the Coalition force using a barrage of small-arms, rocket propelled grenades and mortar fire.

Coalition forces defended themselves by engaging the militants with small-arms fire and close-air, precision munitions until insurgent threat was eliminated.

All Coalition forces survived the engagement, it is estimated multiple militants were killed during the fighting.

Insurgents disrupted

Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition forces killed three insurgents and uncovered a weapons and ammunition cache in Bala Boluk District, Farah province.



As ANSF and Coalition forces helicopters entered the area, they were attacked by insurgents with small-arms and heavy-weapons fire coming from inside a cave.

ANSF and Coalition forces returned fire, killing three insurgents.

A search of the area by ANSF and Coalition forces following the attack uncovered a cache of several weapons and ammunition.

No ANSF, Coalition forces or civilian casualties were reported.

Army general visits

Army Maj. Gen. Robert Cone, commanding general, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan, visited the Marines and Sailors of Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force – Afghanistan.



During his address to the troops, the general emphatically stated, “no other battalion-sized unit had made as big a contribution to the security of Afghanistan as the Marines of TF 2/7.”

Upon rendering his thanks, he noted the significant accomplishments of the Marines who were operating in some of the toughest regions of Afghanistan.

Serving in Afghanistan since April in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, TF 2/7 has been conducting counterinsurgency operations with an emphasis on mentoring of the Afghan National Police.

The Marine unit has been conducting full spectrum operations throughout Afghanistan’s Helmand and Farah provinces.

Downed helo response

U.S. forces assigned to the International Security Assistance Force in Regional Command – East killed 12 militants and detained one while securing the site where a Coalition helicopter was forced to land in Wardak province after taking enemy fire.



The UH-60 Black Hawk came un-

der small-arms fire from a number of militants. The helicopter crew returned fire, but had to land when the tail was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade.

Coalition ground forces responding to the scene were engaged by several militants in the area.

Coalition forces responded, initially killing five militants. They continued searching the area and were engaged by more militants. Coalition forces again responded, killing seven more militants and detaining one.

There were no ISAF or coalition casualties resulting from the attack, and all personnel were evacuated from the scene.

The helicopter was recovered and taken to a nearby ISAF base.

Taliban targeted

Afghan and Coalition forces detained three suspected militants during operations to disrupt the Taliban and Haqqani foreign fighter networks in Khowst and Zabul provinces.



Conducting a combined operation, Afghan and coalition forces searched compounds in Khowst District, targeting a Haqqani associate believed to facilitate the movement of foreign fighters into Afghanistan.

The forces searched the compounds without incident, detaining one suspected militant.

A second combined operation, also conducted by Afghan and Coalition forces, resulted in the force detaining two suspected militants, while targeting the Taliban’s foreign fighter network in Zabul province.



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lory Stevens

Elders of the Kapisa province attend the Peace Jirga at the Tagab District Center.

Peace Jirga aims to resolve security problems in Tagab

By Army 1st Lt. Lory Stevens
Task Force Warrior

Governor Khuweja Abubaker hosted a Peace Jirga for the people of Kapisa province at the Tagab District Center.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, provincial government officials, and elements of Task Force Warrior planned and organized the event to try to find a political solution to the security problems plaguing the area.

Last month a smaller shura, the Afghan word for an assembly of elders addressed many of the same concerns. This Peace Jirga aimed to focus more on resolutions.

“We have diagnosed the problems many times, we now need to find the prescription and cure the disease,” said Haji Khoshal of southeastern Tagab as he addressed 250 elders from Kapisa province.

Beverli DeWalt, U.S. Department of State representative for the Kapisa and Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team, attended the Peace Jirga along with several other PRT members.

“The goals of the provincial council include unity, security, reconstruction, and eradicating rivalry and blood feuds,” DeWalt said.

Some elders said if the people found a solution for their problems, then the government and international community would support them.

“We need one tribe, one shura, one district,” said an elder, summing up the spirit of the Peace Jirga.

The audience supported the idea to create another shura. The Afghan Social Outreach Program shura, due to be created in the near future, may fulfill this need.

Outpost improvements key to 6-4 CAV security

By Spc. Brandon Sandefur
3rd Brigade Combat Team

For the Soldiers in the mountainous terrain of the Nuristan province, improving combat outposts is vital to security and relations in the area.

Since the Pakistan border is a common entrance into Afghanistan for insurgents, the outposts located near the border have the task of denying them access.

Units along the border conduct patrols through the villages to meet with the locals and show they’re there to help. Although the locations of the outposts are good for interaction with villagers, they are also targets for insurgent attacks.

Soldiers who live and fight in the outposts have to constantly improve their boundaries to stay safe so they can continue to help the locals in the area.

Some of the tasks Soldiers regularly perform to reinforce their fighting positions are restringing concertina wire, filling barriers and fortifying the fighting positions in guard towers.

“The best thing about being on the outpost is seeing the improvements and the satisfaction of knowing you made it better,” said Sgt. Brian Creed, squad leader, 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment.

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Couch, outpost platoon sergeant, has



U.S. Army photo by

Spc. Brandon Sandefur

Soldiers from 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment pack dirt into a Hesco barrier along the perimeter of their combat outpost in northeastern Afghanistan.

similar feelings about the many improvements on the outposts and feels they’ve improved their ability to fight and defend.

“We’ve done a bunch of things here,” he said. “We have triple strand concertina wire where there was only single strand before.

“We now have a good, clean, flat landing zone for aircraft,”

Couch said. “We’ve also improved the fighting positions with more barriers and by building more bunkers.”

Having a good fighting position and the ability to defend it is important, but the

Soldiers need something to boost their morale as well.

“Improving Soldiers’ morale is also really important too, especially up here because we’re kind of away from everything,” Couch said. “We now have Internet and phones so Soldiers contact their friends and family when they have time.”

“The best thing about being on an outpost is seeing the improvements and the satisfaction of knowing you made it better.”

Sgt. Brian Creed
6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry
Regiment squad leader

Marines help residents improve community

By Marine Corps
Sgt. Ray Lewis
Task Force 2d Battalion,
7th Marine Regiment

Until recently, local residents in Delaram have not had clean drinking water.

The lack of clean water has caused some residents to resort to drawing filthy water from streams and rivers run through their villages.

Conditions have gradually begun to improve, thanks to the assistance of the civil affairs Marines assigned to Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force – Afghanistan.

These Marines, who are assigned to the task force's 3rd Civil Affairs Group, have spearheaded numerous well water projects to give Afghan residents a reason to rejoice.

"These people are poor," said Gunnery Sgt. Omar Palaciosreal, Team 2 chief, 3rd CAG. "It's not like they can just turn on a faucet. They don't have a faucet."

This initiative to provide residents with clean water is one of many civil military operations projects carried out by the Marines.

Other projects include school renovation, road improvement, well restoration and the construction of nine new wells throughout the district and outlying villages.

The new water wells are expected to aid in eliminating the health risks local residents faced by continuing to use contaminat-



Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Ray Lewis
Marines assigned to the 3rd Civil Affairs Group, Task Force 2/7 assess progress of a well near Delaram.

"... the new well will make conditions here better."

U.S. Marine Corps
Cpl. Erika Garcia

ed river water. Before the wells were restored, residents got their drinking, cooking and cleaning water in the same areas where animals roam.

"I think the new well will make conditions here better," said Cpl. Erika Garcia, a civil affairs team member.

"I see where they get water, and it's nasty," she said. "Animals walk through there, and it's not clean. A well is definitely going to lead to improved health within the community."

Because the contractors used by the Marines employ local laborers to help complete various civil affairs projects, local Afghans are able to put their money back into their own community.



Courtesy photo
Members of the Afghan National Police take part in a Kandak Commander's Course at Camp Alamo.

ANA joins ranks of commander's course

By G. A. Volb
Camp Alamo

Members of the Afghan National Police are participating in an eight-week Kandak Commander's Course at the Kabul Military Training Center at Camp Alamo.

The course teaches students from both the Afghan National Army and ANP everything from map reading, task organizing, operational terms and graphics, to leadership, combat tactics and the military decision making processes.

ANP Col. Bashir Ahmad Darwish is one of six policemen taking the course he sees as a positive step toward ANP and ANA operational integration.

"We're primarily responsible for the eradication of poppy fields," the colonel said of his particular ANP Kandak. Kandaks are Afghan battalions varying in size depending on makeup and mission. "Once we heard there were instructors here teaching subjects to help us better execute our mission, we signed up. What we're learning here more closely resembles military tactics."

"In the past we operated independently of the ANA," Colonel Darwish said. "But now we work more like a team. The ANA provides security for operations, while we perform the actual eradication," he said, adding, "It's the same for operations in Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, and Farah provinces."

"This is the first time we've had ANP in our Kandak Commanders' Course," said John Powell, MPRI's chief of Institutional Training Team. "It's also the first time they're participating in our Staff Officers Course and Training Management Course."

Contractor mentor class improves Nuristan bid process

By Tech. Sgt. Kristina Barrett
Freedom Watch Afghanistan

The hidden side of rebuilding Afghanistan lies in the construction bid process. Since this process is new to Afghans, the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team is helping mentor contractors to improve the quality of bids received through a weekly class taught at FOB Kala Gush.

Prior to Coalition reconstruction, there was no formal bid process to choosing contractors. Because of this, Afghan contractors were submitting bids that didn't meet standards.

"A lot of times we see bids that are poorly written," said Navy Lt. Regis Nelis, PRT engineer. "Most bids didn't include a breakdown of costs so we didn't know what we were paying them for."

The classes are part of a series where one topic is taught every week. Topics include the bid process, cost analysis and progress reports. Since each bid is site specific, the main focus of the classes is ensuring quality throughout the bid process. The classes explain the bid process in detail so each contractor recognizes what separates one bid from another.

"If a contractor wants to know why one bid was chosen over another, this class will explain," Nelis explained. "Once they come here, they understand."

The classes also help contractors build relationships with the PRT and within their own communities. Many area contractors attend – up to 20 per class. Ibrahim Tamim is a local contractor



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristina Barrett
Lt. J.G. Jeremy Gerrero, Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team, teaches Afghan contractors the bid process of contract negotiations.

who has two current projects with the PRT. He still attends because he is interested learning the whole process involved in creating bids.

"So far I have learned a lot, but there is so much more for me to learn," he said. "I want to learn the process from beginning to end."

The classes are part of a long-term effort to not only rebuild but pave the way for new construction.

"If the contractors can create a better product, they can teach others," Nelis said. "It also increases their chances of having their bids considered in addition to building consistent practices within the industry."

Letters to the Editor

More large photos

Why don't you guys put more large photos in the first half of the magazine?

- B.H., Kandahar

We're on the same page with you there. Putting more photos in the magazine has been a goal of ours since our current crew took over. Being a news section though, most of the space in pages 2-5 is reserved for text. It's a balance between getting the word out and making compelling pages, as we like to say. There was some talk not too long ago about cutting

back the news pages to make more room for full photo pages. The next time the subject pops up, we'll definitely keep your opinion in mind.

Great job

I just checked out the magazine on the CJTF-101 website and it has brought back many great memories of my deployment to Afghanistan back in 2005. I see the changes you have made to improve Freedom Watch Afghanistan and all I can say is "wow!" Your staff truly knows what it means to strive for excellence in

all you do. Thanks for your efforts in publicizing the contributions of U.S. and Coalition forces there so well. Keep up the great work!

- C.M., Moultrie, Ga

First of all, thank you for your service and for taking the time to check out the magazine online at www.cjtf101.com. We've done a lot to improve this publication and it's great people are noticing the changes. Thanks for your feedback!



Have your say - email the editor at freedomwatch@swa.army.mil

Submissions will be edited for content and length. Authors will be identified by initials only

VETCAP

*Building relationships with
Afghanistan's nomadic tribe*

**By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt.
Tammie Moore**
U.S. AFCENT News Team

For Afghanistan's nomadic Kuchi tribes, diseases spreading through livestock herds could have devastating effects on their livelihood. In a region where the average income is less than a dollar a day, the Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team veterinary civil assistance patrol not only strengthened the herds, it strengthened relations with the tribesmen.

PRT members met the Kuchis soon after arriving in Qalat near their forward operating base. After meeting and learning more about the tribe, they quickly realized their assistance was needed.

"We identified them as 'at risk' people, and they are the poorest people in Afghanistan," said Spc. Don DeBardelaben, PRT civil affairs specialist and Kuchi tribal coordinator.

The PRT soon began delivering humanitarian assistance to Mohammad Rasul, Kuchi line director, to begin building their relationship with the tribe.

"I started talking with Mohammad and

gave him humanitarian aid -- a weekly drop of mainly winter stuff," said the native of Conroe, Texas.

"The aid warmed people up to the idea of working with the PRT, because it was an immediate result they could see."

At first, the Kuchis were hesitant to have their animals treated, according to DeBardelaben. "They were really scared," he said. "They told us the coalition has not seen them in eight years."

Tribe members eventually overcame their initial reluctance and took advantage of the free vaccinations; over the course of two Veterinarian Capabilities Missions, more than 400 animals were treated.

Due to the overwhelming turnout, the veterinarians enlisted the aid of fellow service members. Air Force Staff Sgt. Don Elias, PRT force protection NCOIC, stepped up to help wrangle and treat animals.

"Being a guy from a city who has never worked with livestock, this was quite interesting," said the sergeant deployed from Wright-

Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

"To actually go out and see a world beyond the flightline is an experience like no other," said the native of Buffalo, N.Y.. "To meet people and speak their language not only gives the people a sense of hope, but it makes a humbling experience. I really enjoyed this opportunity."

Army Maj. (Dr.) Dana McDaniel, cooperative medical assistance veterinarian recognizes her job allows her to do more than treat animals - it helps build relationships.

"In this particular situation, with the Kuchis, it is important to build trust," she explained. "They tend to keep to themselves, and this is a good opportunity for them to see that there are others here to help them. We can keep the Kuchi from needing support from the Taliban."

The veterinarian team trained a handful of Kuchis the procedures to vaccinate their animals before the VETCAP came to an end. They left them with medicine to treat another 1,000 animals.

"Everyone was happy," DeBardelaben said. "Kuchi men I would see before who did not want to shake my hand or talk to me, are now coming up and shaking my hand saying 'thank you.' This is going to open the door for future operations."





(Left) Air Force Staff Sgt. Don Elias deworms livestock during a veterinary medical outreach conducted by the Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team. (U.S. Air Force photo by MSgt Keith Brown)

Army Spc. Don DeBardelan deworms Kuchi livestock during a veterinary medical outreach conducted by the Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team. The Kuchi are traditional nomadic people who move their herds across the vast country in search of food for the livestock. Specialist DeBardelan, a civil affairs specialist, coordinates with Kuchi leaders to provide their tribe humanitarian assistance. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Keith Brown)

Afghan sick call

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristina Barrett
Freedom Watch Afghanistan

In a wooden B-hut at FOB Kala Gush, medicine and medical supplies are packed neatly on shelves and hung on walls, making maximum use of every available inch in the 700 square foot facility.

In a scene that has elements of CSI, the Discovery Network and 20/20 Medical Mystery, medics and doctors do their best to help the citizens of Nuristan province. Afghans travel from everywhere, sometimes for hours to make it to this clinic.

Because of the language barrier and lack of lifetime medical care, Airmen, Soldiers and Sailors working at the clinic must use their experience, intuition and clues to figure out what brings the patient to them.

"Some patients we can help, others we can't," said Senior Airman Shannon Gruett. "Sometimes we have to refer them to either the Afghan hospital at Jalalabad or the Egyptian hospital at Bagram."

Of the 20 to 40 people who show up every Friday, normally half are children. Nuristan is very mountainous, so it's the children who get most of the broken bones, but this isn't normally what brings them to the clinic.

"A lot of what we see here are illnesses related to lack of nutrition," Gruett said. "Sometimes all that is needed is a packet of Flinstone vitamins to cure what ails them."

Flinstone vitamins and Motrin are simple cures but go a long way in easing aches and pains while helping the body get stronger.

On a recent visit, an Afghan man complained of a sore back. After a series of questions from the medical staff, the cause was discovered – the man was moving rocks to make a wall by his home. After shown the proper way to lift, the man was given Motrin and sent on his way.

Sometimes it's not that easy. On the same morning, a woman and her husband came into the clinic. She had a variety of problems, however, the staff's series of questions were not revealing any answers. The woman underwent a physical examination but the cause was not any clearer. Finally the woman was sent home and the staff instructed the husband to bring back medical paperwork. That afternoon, the husband returned with a sheaf of papers and X-rays. It was discovered the woman had her left lung removed some time ago and her problems were beyond the scope of the clinic to solve.

"We try and help the ones we can," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Oscar Crosshabeyeh. "We are just a field clinic and some patients need a higher level of care."

This higher level of care doesn't always come easy either. Some of the more remote villages are hours or days away from the level of care they need. This doesn't seem to deter the Afghans though. Most who are referred end up getting the care they need. The clinic staff keeps a log so they can track patient's visits and provide follow up care on their diagnosis or on the referral given.

"We know they are being taken care of and they know we are here for them if they need it," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin Miller. "This helps our relationship with the Afghans and increases the footing of the Afghan government."

So after a day of deciphering, educated guessing, evaluating and treating, the clinic refocuses on its primary mission of treating the members of the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team. With the PRT the questions are easier and diagnosis is faster but the staff says their true reward is helping the people.

"We know we are offering a real service here," Gruett said. "They know we care about what happens to them."



Returning to combat

Story and photo by
U.S. Marine Corps
Sgt. Ray Lewis
Special Purpose Marine
Air Ground Task Force



There was blood in the water. It was a grim addition to the Iraqi sewage canal littered with dead sheep and festering fish. That's where the Marines of Company E, 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division found their comrade after the attack.

Just seconds before, Cpl. Garrett Jones was patrolling the streets of Iraq with his team when he was suddenly hurled 15 feet into the air by a booby trap.

"It was just a big dust cloud," said Cpl. Robert C. Pofahl, who stood 10 feet in front of Jones when the bomb detonated. "I ran toward him, and I fell in the canal. The mud was almost up to my knees. It was probably the worst smell you could smell. That's when I saw the blood in the water."

The next thing Jones knew, he was on board a helicopter flight headed for the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. He awoke a couple days later, but said he doesn't recall much after the operation.

"I just remember talking to my family," he said. "I remember saying, 'I hear they make really good prosthetics.'"

Jones had 17 surgeries to clean the infected area in his left leg. He was treated for third-degree burns and shrapnel that peppered his shoulder and legs.

On Aug. 20, 2007, Jones was released from the hospital – just in time to see his fellow Marines of Echo Company return home from Iraq.

"I was at their homecoming in a wheelchair," Jones said. "Seeing my guys was emotional for me because I knew I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them."

Jones yearned to be back with his Marine family. He wanted to serve with the Marines who saved his life.

"We all wanted him back," Pofahl said. "He's a good guy to have your back. He'd take the shirt off of his back if you need it. At the same time, we were like, 'How would he be able to do that because of rehab and all.'"

In February 2008, Jones was visited by Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James Conway. Seizing the moment, he asked to return to the 2/7.

"I asked to come back and his assistant took my info," Jones explained. "A couple of days later, I had orders. I was so excited I almost didn't believe it."

When Jones checked back into his battalion, many Marines were awestruck. They couldn't believe how much progress he had made in less than a year.

"None of us knew how advanced prosthetics were," Pofahl said. "He's been called a walking legend, literally. We're all glad to have him around. He's one of those guys who don't let anything get to him, obviously," Pofahl said.

Although Jones couldn't return to the infantry, he was assigned to the intelligence section where he provides his fellow infantrymen with information, keeping them away from harmful situations.

"It's good to be able to do something to keep Marines safe," Jones said. "If I can't be out there with them, I get to help them."

Jones wanted to deploy with his unit when it was ordered to deploy to Afghanistan in April 2008, but wasn't yet ready to undergo pre-deployment training. He knew he would get no handouts despite being an amputee - he would have to prove himself all over again.

"It wasn't just a hookup - I had to do all the training all other Marines do."

Once all physical and administrative requirements were complete, Jones was ready to deploy and help the Marines who once helped him.

"He's always motivated," said Gunnery Sgt. Michael J. Ortiz, battalion intelligence chief. "His morale is always high. The only time I see him upset is when he sees someone hurt or killed because he takes it personal. He always bounces back and visits whoever it is in the hospital to see how they are."

Jones said he personally meets with new amputees. He wants them to know just because they are an amputee, it doesn't mean they can't reach their goals.

"I've told them to keep their head up," Jones said. "I want to show them that if I can do it, they can do it. I want to set the example. I want to show them that a bad thing might happen, but you can still make good of bad circumstances."

Jones has kept in contact with many wounded warriors when they returned home to the U.S.

Corporal Jones wants to continue serving with the 1st Marine Division as an intelligence specialist. He also wants to keep helping fellow amputees continue service in the Marine Corps. "Just because you have an injury, it doesn't mean you have to leave the Marine Corps," Jones said. "You just have to work hard. I want to let those guys know back in the States that there is a place for you. I plan on being one of those examples."



WARRIOR PROFILE

RANK/NAME: Senior Airman Shannon Gruett

COUNTRY, BRANCH OF SERVICE : U.S. Air Force

HOMETOWN: San Antonio, Texas

CURRENT ASSIGNMENT: Nuristan PRT medic, FOB Kala Gush

HOBBIES: Taking pictures, music and writing

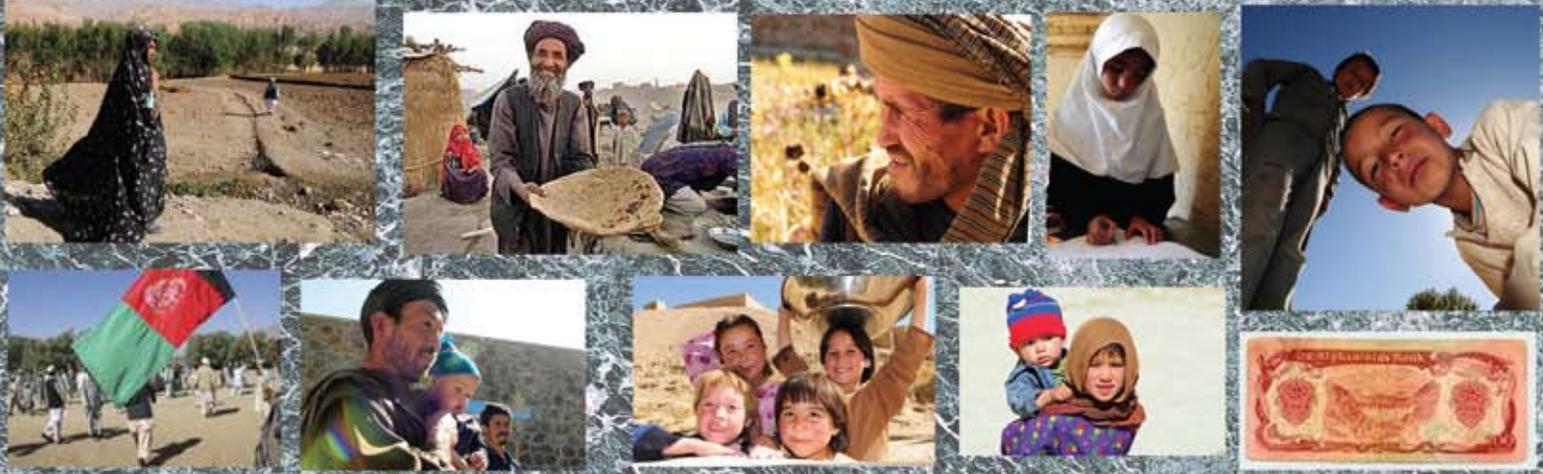
TIMES DEPLOYED: Twice

BEST THING ABOUT DEPLOYMENT: Working with the kids and being able to do a lot of things most Airmen don't get to do.

GOALS WHILE DEPLOYED: Push myself mentally and physically and tell myself that I can accomplish this

FREE TIME ACTIVITIES: Play sports, hang out with friends and watch movies

PLANS UPON RETURN: PCS to Langley AFB and start prerequisites for the Air Force physicians assistant program



Afghanistan: Its Economy

OVERVIEW

Afghanistan's economy is recovering from decades of conflict. The economy has improved significantly since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 largely because of the infusion of international assistance, the recovery of the agricultural sector, and service sector growth. Real gross domestic product growth exceeded 7 percent in 2007. Despite the progress of the past few years, the country is extremely poor, landlocked and highly dependent on foreign aid, agriculture and trade with neighboring countries. Much of the population continues to suffer from shortages of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care and jobs. Criminality, insecurity, and the Afghan government's inability to extend rule of law to all parts of the country pose challenges to future economic growth. It will probably take the remainder of the decade and continuing donor aid and attention to significantly raise Afghanistan's living standards from its current level, which is among the lowest in the world. International pledges made by more than 60 countries and international financial institutions at the Berlin Donors Conference for Afghan reconstruction in March 2004 reached \$8.9 billion for 2004-09. While the interna-

tional community remains committed to Afghanistan's development, pledging more than \$24 billion at three donors' conferences since 2002, Kabul will need to overcome a number of challenges. Expanding poppy cultivation and a growing opium trade generate roughly \$4 billion in illicit economic activity and looms as one of Kabul's most serious policy concerns. Other long-term challenges include: budget sustainability, job creation, corruption, government capacity and rebuilding infrastructure.

GDP - per capita: \$1,000 (2007 est.)

Labor force: 15 million (2004 est.)

Labor force - by occupation: Agriculture: 80 percent; industry, 10 percent; services, 10 percent (2004 est.)

Unemployment rate: 40 percent (2005 est.)

Population below poverty line: 53 percent (2003)

Revenues: \$715 million

Expenditures: \$2.6 billion

Agriculture - products: Opium, wheat, fruits, nuts, wool, mutton, sheepskins, lambskins

Industries: Textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, cement, handwoven carpet, natural gas, coal, copper

Words & Phrases

I want to change dollars.

Ghwaram yaw tse dalar badal kram.

Where can I change some money?

Cheri payse badlawaley sham?

What is the exchange rate?

De badledo baya tsumra da?

money
payse

dollar
dalar

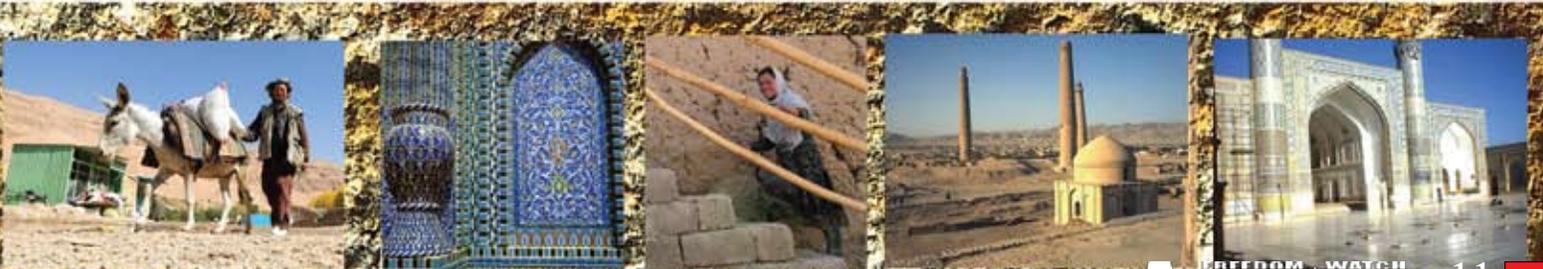
receipt
rasid

credit card
kridit kart

cashier
mahasib

calculator
de hisab mashin

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photos from the field



Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz holds an Airman's Call at Bagram Air Field. Schwartz hosted the open forum for Airmen to directly ask him questions about his vision for the future of the Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse)



Members of the British Territorial Army 4th Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment, conduct a patrol around Kabul. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Laura Smith)



An F/A-18 Hornet assigned to the "War Party" of Strike Fighter Squadron 87 deploys flares before beginning a close-air support mission supporting ground forces in Afghanistan. VFA-87 is assigned to Carrier Air Wing 8 embarked aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. George Schmuke)



1st Sgt. David Thomas, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, leads Task Force Dragon Blade Soldiers onto the range as they prepare for their signal mission in Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Kimberly Johnson)



Afghanistan National Army soldiers march in formation during a graduation ceremony for 828 soldiers at the Kabul Military Training Center. Afghan soldiers completed their basic training and will deploy throughout the country in support of Afghanistan's national defense. (U.S. Navy Photo by Lt. Cmdr. John Gay)



UNIT SPOTLIGHT

Name of Unit: Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team

Branch of service: Interservice/interagency – Army, Air Force, Navy, Army National Guard, Navy Reserve, Department of State, Department of Agriculture, Army Corps of Engineers

Mission: The Nuristan PRT maximizes a whole government approach to conducting counterinsurgency operations and extending the reach and legitimacy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Led by an integrated command team and with an innovative and aggressive use of information operations to overcome the challeng-

es of geography, the PRT strives to bring the appropriate resources and assets to find solutions, bring security and foster development. By looking ahead, the PRT seeks to create the permissive security environment necessary to attract the kind of economic incentives that will generate organic, natural resource-based industry development within the province.

Most interesting thing about the unit: The sheer diversity of people in terms of their individual backgrounds, branches of service or agency and components within those branches.

Would you like to have your unit in the spotlight?

If so, email the editor at freedomwatch@swa.army.mil