



NEWS

Bringing governance to ungoverned places

By Cpl. Reece Lodder

GARMSIR DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- In the furthest reaches of Garmsir district, nearly 70 kilometers from the district center, a mixture of local elders and farmers sat quietly around a collection of ornately woven Afghan rugs, awaiting discussion with their district governor and Marine leaders. Following their recent assumption of security responsibility in Garmsir, the leadership of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment joined District Governor Mohammad Fahim to visit and interact with citizens throughout the district, Nov. 22 to 24. Shuffling brightly-colored prayer beads through their fingers, local residents listened to Fahim's encouragement, intently processing the 25-year-old governor's words. Though Fahim is headquartered within the Garmsir bazaar, far from many of the people he serves, he used the visit to ask for their help in continuing the development of the flourishing district. He encouraged the various tribes to unite, saying inter-tribal conflicts prevent further progress toward peace and stability throughout Garmsir. "With unity, there is prosperity," Fahim said. **(STORY)**



Afghan and Marine forces examine the impact of culture, religion

By Staff Sgt. Andrew Miller



CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan -- The Afghan National Army 1st Brigade, 215th Corps and Regimental Combat Team 5 conducted a Religious Engagement Conference here, Nov. 23. "In this part of Afghanistan, culture is religion and religion is culture," said Daoud Parwani, the RCT-5 cultural advisor. "The two concepts are inseparable, and unless you are speaking in the language of religion, no one will listen to you." The conference brought together religious leaders from the partnered forces, including ANA Religious and Cultural Affairs Officers and U.S. Navy chaplains, to discuss the importance of religious engagement with Afghan forces and the people of southern Helmand province. Navy Cmdr. Mark Winward, the RCT-5 chaplain and a native of East Hartford, Conn., said the spirit of the conference is best reflected by a quote from a fellow chaplain, Navy Capt. Paul Wrigley, on the impact of religious belief in theater operations. "An operational commander, however well trained in the military issues, who is ignorant of or discounts the importance of religious belief can strengthen his enemy, offend his allies, alienate his own forces and antagonize public opinion,"

Winward recited. "Religious belief is a factor he must consider in evaluating the enemy's intentions and capabilities, the state of his own forces, his relationship with his allies and his courses of action." **(STORY)**

Local police train with the 'Walking Dead'

By Lance Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez

NAWA DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- The Marines of the "Walking Dead," 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, have brought a new kind of police training program to the citizens of Nawa. The Afghan Local Police academy, established here this September by 1/9 and funded by the Afghanistan Ministry of Interior, trains residents of various 'watons,' or villages, to become local policemen. "The villages around here are mostly patrolled by Afghan Uniformed Police," said 1st Sgt. William C. Barnes, the 1/9 Headquarters and Service Company first sergeant and the ALP academy staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge. "They don't necessarily live in the villages they're assigned to." This familiarity with their own communities sets future members of the ALP apart from Afghan police forces currently patrolling Nawa. "The mission of our Afghan Local Police academy is to train men to protect and police their own villages," said Barnes, a Maysville, Mo. native. "This way, they have a better rapport with their people because they know who they are." **(STORY)**



Afghan forces, 'Walking Dead' Marines disrupt insurgent operations in Nawa mobile bazaar

By Lance Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez



NAWA DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- Only hours after sunrise, a patch of desert begins to bustle with the life of commerce. As money changes hands and locals peruse the wares of makeshift shops, purple smoke rises from the distance, and military helicopters land to off-load their passengers. Within minutes the partnered unit, composed of Afghan National Army soldiers and Marines and sailors of the "Walking Dead", 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, have built a presence in the bazaar to disrupt insurgent operations as part of Operation Black Market here, Nov. 27. "This operation was started due to the lack of coalition presence in this mobile bazaar," said Cpl. Michael Myers, a biometrics team leader with Headquarters and Service Company, 1/9, and native of Sinclair Shores, Mich. "We never know where they are until they've already set up." Afghan soldiers led Marines of Weapons Co., 1/9 through the bazaar, staying alert for any sign of insurgent activity. After their initial patrol through the bazaar, the 1/9 quick reaction force established a vehicle control and biometrics team checkpoint. "As the quick reaction force, our mission was to set up a blocking position to catch suspicious personnel trying to run away from the bazaar," said Staff Sgt. Mickey Lee Jaramillo, the 1/9 QRF staff non commissioned officer-in-charge and a native of Santa Cruz, Calif. **(STORY)**

Top generals, government officials discuss Nad 'Ali, Nawa

By Cpl. Katherine Keleher

In order to support emerging national security requirements, the Department of Defense (DoD) announced the creation of a new office to integrate air and naval combat capabilities. In the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates directed the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps to develop a comprehensive concept to counter emerging anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) challenges. The services collaborated to develop the Air-Sea Battle (ASB) concept. On Aug. 12, 2011, Navy Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, and Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove established the Air-Sea Battle Office (ASBO), creating a framework to implement the ASB concept. The ASB concept will guide the services as they work together to maintain a continued U.S. advantage against the global proliferation of advanced military technologies and A2/AD capabilities. Air-Sea Battle will leverage military and technological capabilities that reflect unprecedented Navy, Marine and Air Force collaboration, cooperation, integration, and resource investments. **(STORY)**



Second phase of transition plans reviewed during conference

By RCSouthwest team



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- "Tranche Two," the second phase of transition in southwest Afghanistan was the highlight of a three-day conference aboard Camp Leatherneck in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Nov. 10-13. The upcoming inteqal, the Dari word for transition, or tranche, a similar German term that assumes the same meaning incorporates turning over authority to coalition leaders and provincial governmental organizers throughout both Nimroz and Helmand provinces, giving those organizations the lead with developing Nimroz province. Afghan leaders traveled from as far away as Zaranj, a small metropolis in Nimroz province that skirts Iran, and Kabul, in the northern region of the country. Nimroz province is located in the extreme southwest corner of Afghanistan, and borders both Iran and Pakistan, making the region's stability crucial to the success of NATO International Security Assistance Forces or ISAF. "The value of this working group was to show that we are able to start to build common planning assumptions so we can go forward with the transition," said Col. Mike Lawrence, Regional Command Southwest Nimroz provincial coordinator.

"You can't make a good plan unless you share common assumptions." **(STORY)**

Afghan forces to take on security lead for Nad 'Ali

In Defence News

The latest phase of the transition process, announced on Sunday 27 November 2011 by Afghan President Hamid Karzai, demonstrates continuing progress in the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Training the Afghans to lead on security across the country is now the main effort of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops. Building up the ANSF capability so that they can prevent Al-Qaeda from operating freely in Afghanistan and posing a threat to us and to our allies around the world will allow British combat forces to draw down gradually. Across Afghanistan, the announcement means that Afghan forces will soon have lead responsibility for the security of almost half of the country's population. All of Afghanistan will have begun the process of transition by the end of 2013 and the ANSF will be leading on security operations in all provinces by the end of 2014. **(STORY)**



New Border Advisor Team up to bat in Helmand

By Cpl. Marco Mancha



COMBAT OUTPOST CASTLE, Afghanistan -- A new Border Advisor Team recently stepped up to the plate in the war on terror. While nearly half a dozen teams have come before them to train the Afghan policemen guarding the borders of Afghanistan, this group is unlike those before them. The Marines and sailors of BAT-1 bring a whole new skill set to the Afghan Border Police of 1st Kandak, 6th Zone. The team noticed a big change in the ABP's performance and attitude from the beginning of their relationship. One member with the team gives credit to the BATs that came before them and the Afghan policemen's will to work. "We actually got here and all the stuff that we were going to teach them, they pretty much already knew," said Sgt. James Carney IV of Clarksville, Tenn. "They know we're not going to be here forever, and I guess it's given them a sense of motivation to work for themselves. They already know vehicle checkpoints, basic police work, and much more, which allows us to just refine their skills so they can be more self-sufficient." **(STORY)**

Afghan Border Police emphasize security, prevent insurgent activity along borders

By Cpl. Marco Mancha

COMBAT OUTPOST CASTLE, Afghanistan -- There has been a huge change in the focus of the United States Border Patrol since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Their focus of effort has turned more toward preventing terroristic threats from entering the United States through its more than 300 border checkpoints, according to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection official website. The Afghan Border Police has established a very similar mission, but on a slightly smaller scale. The ABP emphasizes border security around small Afghan towns and villages to prevent the infiltration of illegal drugs and weapons, which fuel the insurgency. Approximately 13,000 ABP work in unison with the Afghan Uniformed Police to help sustain the enemy threat along Afghanistan's borders and the outskirts of small towns and villages. They patrol the perimeter of their areas of operations daily to ensure the safety of the citizens. The border police have worked diligently over time to improve their skills and effectiveness through rigorous training and continue to work with Marine mentors who assist them. **(STORY)**



Open for Business: CLB-1 builds route, brings growth to Helmand

By Cpl. Katherine M. Solano



FORWARD OPERATING BASE GERONIMO, Afghanistan -- The Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 1, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), are currently in the midst of a first-time operation. They are constructing a route between the Nowa and Marjah districts in Helmand province. The multiple-week project along Route Victoria will bring a route to an area that has no other distinguished roads. "Basically there is no set road here right now [so] it's important for Helmand province as a whole," said 2nd Lt. Ian Chuckran, the operations platoon commander with Alpha Company, CLB-1. "It will provide trafficability even after the Marines and coalition forces leave the area. The construction will include multiple phases over its course. The land needs to be leveled, blast holes need to be filled in, gravel needs to be transported to the worksite from various areas and culverts will be emplaced for irrigation and flood prevention. **(STORY)**

Ceremony marks the end of deployment for Estonian Co.

By Cpl. Meredith Brown

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan - Estonian Company 12 marked the end of their six-month deployment during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Nov. 22. Company 12 operated within Task Force Helmand, the U.K.-led initiative in the province. "They were holding a piece of ground that was pretty crucial to developing security in northern Nad-e Ali and squeezing the insurgent presence out of the tri-boundary area and they have done that very effectively," said Brig. Gen. Patrick Sanders, the commanding general for Task Force Helmand and guest speaker at the ceremony. When the company first arrived in Helmand province, they took over an area that was secured by previous Estonian companies, before moving into a new area that was ruled by Taliban fighters, said Maj. Martin Kukk, company commander for Estonian Company 12. The company's main tasks were to secure their area of operation, expand it and provide the local population with security. "So for four months we had pretty hard times pushing the enemy out and starting to work with a new population and in new villages," said Kukk. "I would say our most important highlight was clearing our (area of operation) from (improvised explosive devices). We operated in an area which was seeded with hundreds of IEDs and we found more than 100 of them and so we provided the local population with more freedom of movement.." **(STORY) (VIDEO by Cpl. Daniel Wulz)**



35 Engineer Regiment beat the clock to build Helmand checkpoint

In Denfece News



British soldiers have built a checkpoint in record time to help stop the movement of insurgents in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Just eight sappers from 35 Engineer Regiment worked at full-speed to build Checkpoint Khaki in just three days to help stop the Taliban moving along part of Route 601, a major highway in the Lashkar Gah district. Until now this stretch of highway has not been monitored by the Afghan National Police (ANP), allowing insurgents the freedom to use the road, but the ANP put in a call for help to build the checkpoint to allow them to crack down on insurgents' movements. The operation was planned by Afghan Police Precinct Commander Mohammad Mir together with British troops. The sappers pulled out all the stops to beat the four-day deadline for the build - and just 72 hours later, after building through the night and day, the checkpoint (CP) was ready for use. **(STORY)**

Recon Marines survive another close call in Upper Sangin Valley

By Staff Sgt. Ryan Smith

COMBAT OUTPOST ALCATRAZ, Afghanistan -- During the time 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion has been living and patrolling the Upper Sangin Valley, their Marines have taken great strides to seek out and destroy the insurgent activity so the residents can live in peace. Multiple engagements and patrols throughout the months reduced the action seen by the Marines but there continues the ever present threat of an insurgent encounter. Since their first engagements, the Marines of 3rd Platoon, Company C, have become more cohesive and have gone through the extremes of combat together; from the lull of daily patrols to the instant action of gun fire. Corporal Matthew Chen and Lance Cpl. Joshua Smejkal, reconnaissance Marines with 3rd Platoon, Company C, 3rd Recon Bn., recall how another quiet day on patrol was quickly disrupted by insurgents. One event and two separate stories collide for this retelling of the day's events. **(STORY)**



Taliban leader captured

ISAF Daily Press Release/Helmand's Provincial Media Office Press Release



KABUL, Afghanistan -- Zahir Shah, Taliban leader was captured Nov. 28 by a combined Afghan and coalition security force during an operation in Marjah district, Helmand province. The leader was involved in narcotics trafficking, financed roadside bombs and coordinated direct fire attacks in Helmand province. Additional suspected insurgents were detained during the operation. IN OTHER NEWS: A press release from the Office of the Provincial Governor of Helmand, Helmand's Provincial Media Office reports two terrorist commanders killed in Helmand province Nov. 29 during operations by joint forces in the Nad 'Ali district, Louy Manda area. Also, in another operation three terrorist commanders arrested: Juma Khan reputed by (Saifullah) Mula Abdul reputed by (Abdul) and Mula Naik Mohammad reputed by (Kasid) were captured in the Lashkar Gah, Khoshkaba area. Mulla Juma Khan is accusing of sending threatening letters to government workers and teachers. Various weapons, ammunition, explosive devices, and communications equipment were also captured with the arrested commanders. **(ISAF Press Release) (Helmand's Provincial Media Office)**

VINETTES

Marine's Christmas song offers tribute to family back home

By Cpl. Brian Adam Jones

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- While deployed to Iraq, Robert Allen wrote a song for his wife, Carla. He sent it to her on Christmas Eve. "She said she balled her eyes out when she heard it," said Allen, a native of Pawnee, Okla. "My wife can't stand it at all when I leave, but she understands what I do. She understands being a Marine is not just my job, it's my passion." Allen said he believes his song, "A Marine's Christmas Song," offers tribute to the burdens military members and their families endure as they spend the holidays apart. The song can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT2WbneONWw>. This year, Allen, a Marine Corps master sergeant, is again deployed during the holiday season. He currently serves in Helmand province, Afghanistan, as the aircraft rescue firefighting chief for Marine Wing Support Squadron 371, based out of Camp Leatherneck. **(STORY) (VIDEO by Cpl. Brian Adam Jones)**



Marine brings infantry experience to aviation intelligence in Afghanistan

By Cpl. Justin Boling



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Staff Sgt. Jeffery Quattlebaum reviews imagery taken by aircraft. The videos and information he compiles as an intelligence analyst help NATO International Security Assistance Force troops mitigate hazards and avoid surprises by enemy forces in southwestern Afghanistan. "I provide the eyes for the ground troops conducting operations," said Quattlebaum. "Combat operators need to know where they are going, how to get there and what might be there once they show up. "A lack of information can cost lives," the Philadelphia native added. A Marine with nine years of service, Quattlebaum spent his first years in the Corps as an infantryman. As a grunt, he relied on the same types of intelligence he now produces. "As a squad leader and fire team leader, I remember constantly coming to the intelligence section to ask what is going on," said Quattlebaum. "This was the main driving force for me to come into the intelligence field to see what takes place behind closed doors and provide the most complete picture to guys like myself, who were out on the ground." Quattlebaum said that his career as an infantryman took him all over the world, including multiple deployments to Iraq.

[\(STORY\)](#)

VIDEO

Marine Maj. Gen. John Toolan - Provincial Governor Transition Shura

By Cpl. Daniel Wulz

Marine Maj. Gen. John A. Toolan, commanding general, Regional Command Southwest, talks about the provincial governor shura held in Lashkar Gah. The shura was about giving security responsibilities to Afghan National Security Forces as Marines withdraw from the Helmand province, in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, Afghanistan. [\(VIDEO\)](#) [\(STORY by Cpl. Katherine Keleher\)](#)



Provincial Governor Transition Shura

By Cpl. Daniel Wulz



Maj. Gen. John Toolan, commanding general, Regional Command Southwest, Brig. Gen. Lewis Craparotta, commanding general, 2nd Marine Division and Helmand provincial governor Gulab Mangal participate in a shura about giving security responsibilities to Afghan national security forces as Marines withdraw from the Helmand province. [\(VIDEO\)](#)

Marines Teach Governor Security Detachment MCMAP Skills

By Cpl. Meredith Brown

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- A pair of Afghan Uniformed Police underwent a one-day crash course in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program on Camp Leatherneck, Nov. 29. The program teaches a system of close-quarter combat skills developed by the Marine Corps that combines martial arts techniques with morale and team building. The Afghan policemen are members of Washir District Governor Daoud Mohammad's security detail. Mohammad is a key figure in Helmand province, as it begins to transition toward Afghan control and away from the assistance of NATO International Security Assistance Forces. "I want to be able to protect myself and also protect the people and the governor," said Taj Mohammad, one of the Afghan policemen. Training incorporated fundamental fighting skills including the "basic warrior stance," and angles of movement, which aid in closing the distance with an enemy fighter.. [\(VIDEO\)](#) [\(STORY by Cpl. Timothy Solano\)](#)



CLC-6 Marines support Task Force 1/6 during 'Eastern Storm'

By Sgt. Justin Shemanski



FORWARD OPERATING BASE NOLAY, Afghanistan -- Little more than two months ago, the region through which Route 611 traced north through Helmand province was a dangerous one, at best. Known as the last Taliban stronghold in southern Afghanistan, the Upper Sangin Valley was gripped in terror and saw little activity in the way of local commerce and development along its main thoroughfare. The future was bleak. Operation Eastern Storm was launched in early October to combat the trend of oppression. The major offensive, led by the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, aimed to drive the Taliban-led insurgency from the region, while also reestablishing a sense of stability among the local populace. Interviews with Marines from Combat Logistics Company 6, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) discuss their role in supporting Task Force 1/6 during Operation Eastern Storm. Soundbites include Captain Kyle Schull - Watertown, S.D., company commander for Combat Logistics Company 6, Combat Logistics Battalion 6, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), 1st Lieutenant Alex Urankar - Mountain Lakes, N.J., executive officer for Combat Logistics Company 6, Combat Logistics Battalion 6, 2nd Marine Logistics

Group (Forward), 1st Lieutenant Caelyn Furman - Metairie, La., motor transportation platoon commander for Combat Logistics Company 6, Combat Logistics Battalion 6, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Justin Young - Oregon City, Ore., engineer platoon commander for Combat Logistics Company 6, Combat Logistics Battalion 6, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward). **(VIDEO) (STORY)**

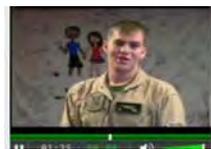
MEDIA COVERAGE/Interviews

Lance Cpl Garrett Dugan
WVUE, New Orleans, La.



Sgt Eric Rader
WDTV, Clarksburg, WV

Sgt Brian Mayorga
KSND, San Diego, Calif.



Lance Cpl Shane Duvall
KARK, Little Rock, Ark.

Cpl Anthony Perez
MSNBC, National



Cpl Leonard Knudsen
WMAQ, Chicago, Ill.

Pfc Nick Wert
WPMT, Harrisburg, Pa.





Lance Cpl Phillip Roberts
WFIE, Evansville, Ind.

Sgt. William Means
KWTV, Oklahoma City, Okla.



Pentagon Press Room

Live operational updates from Michael O'Neil and Paul Reed

CNN Espanol
Cpl. Juan Montoya
Live broadcast

Killing Time:
Fighting through the wringer Albany,
Georgia newspaper "Connect Albany"

Danville Marine uses
photography to relieve
stress in Afghanistan WSL10
Roanoke Va.

AUDIO

Sgt Bryan Krantz
Yuma Sun
Yuma, Ariz.

Maj. Gen. John Toolan
USA Today

SgtMaj Thomas Ruppert
Fox Sports Radio

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

By LCpl. Alfred Lopez

Sgt. Melvin Alegria
(San Jose, Calif.)

Lance Cpl. Joron Cofield
(Louisville, Ky.)

Lance Cpl. Kendrick Johnson
(Dallas, Texas)

Lance Cpl. Stefan Danawa
(Hollywood, Fla.)

SSgt. John Cheze
(Roland, Okla.)

Sgt. Brett Demond
(Alton, Ill.)

THANK YOU

