

3rd BANA finishes advanced training

By Spc. Jim Wagner
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ORGUN-E, Afghanistan — The first operational unit of the Afghan National Army finished advanced training here Jan. 26, the next step in fielding a completely independent fighting force in the country.

For the past month, ANA soldiers have practiced squad and platoon-infantry tactics based on the U.S. Army doctrine. At first, soldiers said the training was very difficult for them to pick up, but they are slowly gaining confidence in their skills as a unit, thanks in large part to the discipline the U.S. Army is demanding.

For years, Afghan soldiers said they have been using a style learned mainly fighting against the Russians during the country's invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. Picking up the American style of infantry tactics has proved tougher than expected.

"The techniques used against the Russians were much different," said Hafizullah, a 3rd Battalion, ANA soldier who fought against the Russians in the mid-to late-1980s. "(The American style) is much safer for individual soldiers, and I joined the ANA because the army wants to keep us alive."

ANA soldiers are taught their skills by an American Special Forces unit expert in building up

See **BANA**, Page 4



Photo by Spc. Jim Wagner, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A 3rd BANA soldier takes aim with his AK-47 during a live-fire exercise outside the city of Orgun-E recently.

Red Cross provides services to deployed soldiers

Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — The ring of the phone wakes you from your slumber; it takes three rings to pick it up as dread fills you.

This is one situation deployed soldiers don't have to worry about.

The Red Cross' main mission

in a deployed situation is to provide emergency communication between servicemembers and their families, according to Cecilia Baize, team three leader, Red Cross. This is a simple process servicemembers and their families should know. First, the family contacts their local Red Cross, giving all the emergency information. The Red Cross will verify the situation by confirming it with a doc-

tor or other official.

After verification, the communication is reported to an Emergency Communication Center.

These centers are located in Fort Sill, Okla. and Falls Church, Va. These messages are then passed on to the Red Cross where the servicemember is deployed and in turn given to the commander or first sergeant

then to the servicemember.

"The command really wants that Red Cross verification before they send their troops home. This is an important mission and they just can let them keep going home every time they say something is wrong," said Baize. "The command likes to know the message is legit,

— See **RED CROSS**, Page 4

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



A black cloud of smoke is seen from the air at the West Pharmaceuticals fire.

Two dead after N.C. blast

KINSTON, N.C.— Rescue crews late Wednesday were trying to pinpoint the locations of three missing workers who were inside a pharmaceutical supply plant that was gutted by a massive explosion.

Authorities said the explosion killed at least two people and injured more than two dozen others — at least 12 of them critically — devastating this tight-knit community in eastern North Carolina.

“It’s very emotional to think that this can occur in the city of Kinston,” said Mayor Johnnie Mosley, who said he has friends who work at the plant. “The magnitude of this incident is just devastating to all of us.”

Rescue crews were working with employees who got out alive to try to pinpoint the locations of those still missing. All random searches have been called off, unless authorities are given specific locations of the missing, because the building has been deemed too unsafe.

One firefighter said there was just “too much damage to just wander around the building and do more searches.”

Bush hits road to push agenda

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — President Bush took his agenda on the road Wednesday, touting his proposals for Medicare reform and tax relief amid mixed reaction to his State of the Union address.

While most Republican lawmakers closed ranks behind the president, many Democrats voiced doubts over his priorities. It appeared certain that his Iraq policy and domestic ini-

tiatives would be the subject of continued debate in Washington.

“Our economy is still kind of nudging along ... but there is more we need to do,” Bush told an enthusiastic audience here.

One of Bush’s goals is to offer a prescription drug benefit for America’s senior citizens. Bush did not unveil a detailed proposal, but said that Medicare should be available in “a variety of forms” that provide the elderly with options. One such plan, he said, would offer a prescription drug benefit.

Allies scour Afghan caves

WASHINGTON — More than 500 U.S. and allied troops are searching dozens of caves in southern Afghanistan after the largest battle between U.S. troops and anti-government forces in nearly a year, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said Wednesday.

The fighters were holed up in a series of caves in the mountains along the Pakistani border. Troops have searched some of the estimated 30 caves in the area and found several small caches of weapons, bomb-making material and mobile phones, Gen. Richard Myers said.

“We believe there are more than 100 additional caves in the area, so operations will probably most likely continue for the next few days,” Myers said.

At least 18 members of a fundamentalist militia were killed in a battle with U.S. and coalition forces Monday, military spokesmen said. There were no reports of allied casualties.

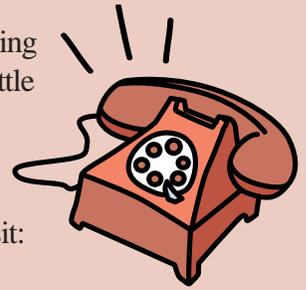
The fighters are thought to be loyal to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former prime minister during the civil war of the early 1990s. Hekmatyar has sided with remnant Taliban and al-Qaida units to fight U.S. troops, according to Afghan and U.S. intelligence sources.

Elephant remains found on Crete

IRAKLIO, Greece — Researchers on the southern Greek island of Crete have unearthed the fossilized tusk, teeth and bones of a *Deinotherium Gigantisimum*, a fearsome

Free Phone Cards

Make calling home a little easier:
For free phone cards visit:



www.operationuplink.org



Replica of an African Elephant skull. Their European ancestors had similar anatomies.

elephant-like creature that might have given rise to ancient legends of one-eyed cyclops monsters.

The 7 million-year-old remains suggest the mammal moved around larger areas of Europe than previously believed, possibly swimming long distances in search of food.

“It was more widespread than we thought,” said Charalampos Fassoulas, a geologist who headed the excavations by the University of Crete’s Natural History Museum.

The 4 1/2-foot (1.4-meter) tusk was found in September, along with seven fossilized teeth the size of softballs and several bones on farmland cleared to plant olive trees.

“We don’t have many fossils of this animal, so everything we find increases our knowledge about it and its habitat,” Fassoulas said, waving his hand over a lab table holding the finds.

The species — whose tusks curved downward from its chin — was the largest of the pre-elephants and reached nearly 15 feet (4.5 meters) tall. Its remains have been found mainly in central Europe.

People should be convinced by behavior pattern

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Given more than a decade of Iraqi lies and deception, “reasonable people” ought to assume that Saddam Hussein is not going to disarm, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said during a Pentagon press briefing today.

Rumsfeld said there is a “fact pattern” Americans should follow as they make up their minds on a possible war with Iraq. He said this fact pattern would be buttressed by intelligence that Secretary of State Colin Powell will reveal during his presentation to the U.N. Security Council.

The United States has always been uncomfortable with striking first, Rumsfeld said. The policy of pre-emption — striking a foe before the foe strikes — is difficult for people who have grown up in this country and believed in the principle that unless attacked, one does not attack, he noted.

But the problem comes with the geometrically increased danger of weapons of mass destruction, he continued. A biological attack could kill 300,000 people, the secretary said. “Does one wait until one’s attacked or does one look at a fact pattern and draw conclusions.”

The idea of the United States using pre-emptive strikes is new, and Americans look for “perfect understanding” of a situation. “The only way you have perfect understanding is after the attack has been made,” Rumsfeld said.

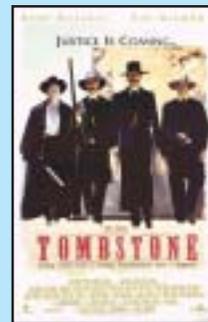
He asked reporters when perfect understanding existed that would have allowed the United States to pre-empt the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

Rumsfeld said the fact pattern is Iraq is ominous and it will not get clearer with time. He said the facts are that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons. The United Nations inspections teams found the proof of those following the Persian Gulf War. What’s more, Iraq had a working plan for nuclear weapons and was within six months of developing an atomic device.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: “Tombstone.” After success cleaning up Dodge City, Wyatt Earp moves to Tombstone, Ariz., and wishes to get rich in obscurity. A band of outlaws that call themselves The Cowboys are causing problems in the region with various acts of random violence, and inevitably leads to a shoot-out at the O.K. Corral.

Tomorrow’s movie will be “Unforgiven.”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER REPORT:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 45F L: 27F	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 45F L: 25F
Kandahar:	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 54F L: 39F	<i>Fog</i> H: 55F L: 36F
Kabul:	<i>Haze</i> H: 45F L: 21F	<i>Fog</i> H: 43F L: 18F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Rain/Snow</i> H: 38F L: 30F	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 43F L: 27F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Coalition Joint Task Force - 180, and is published daily, Monday - Saturday.

- CJTF-180 Commander — Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill
- CJTF-180 Command Sergeant Major — Command Sgt. Maj. Steven R. England
- Public Affairs Officer — Col. Roger King
- Public Affairs Sergeant Major — Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler
- Freedom Watch, an Army newspaper



publication, is produced by the 11th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

- Commander — Maj. William Mott
- NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Christina Bhatti
- Editor — Sgt. W. Cullen James
- Journalists — Pfc. Christina Carde, Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of Freedom Watch are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

All submissions are subject to editing for size and content by the 11th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Motel 6, CJTF-180, Bagram Air Base.

Visit the CENTCOM Web site at www.centcom.mil and click on the CJTF-180 link to get the latest editions of the Freedom Watch.

To be added to the daily distribution list email william.james@us.army.mil



Photos by Spc. Jim Wagner, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ANA soldiers "attack" a house and targets during a live fire exercise outside the city of Orgun-E recently.

BANA, from Page 1

armies throughout the world. The 19th Special Forces Group has trained units throughout Asia, as well as in South America.

In many ways, the training is similar to the basic training ANA soldiers receive at the Kabul Military Training Center. The only difference now is that emphasis is placed on soldiers working together as part of a team, as opposed to individual training. In both respects, discipline is strictly enforced.

"The American Army did train us tough, but that is the way it should be," said Sayed Nadir, platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, 2nd Company, 3rd BANA. "If they were lax training us, then we would be weak and not trained right. I am glad they were tough on us."

In addition to the infantry training, the battalion has been busy building a support infrastructure that can support the unit independently.

American Special Forces advisor to the

ANA, Rocco, said that while amateurs talk tactics, professionals talk logistics, and the unit is well on its way to building up its infrastructure to operate independently.

"At first, (the U.S. Army) was gathering the intelligence from the local community, as far as finding weapon caches or mines," Rocco said.

"Now, the intelligence section is coming up to us and saying, 'there is a mine over here,' or 'there is a weapons cache there.' Then they come up with a plan and we just make small suggestions," he added.

The intelligence gathered has already reaped rewards for the ANA, and probably saved a number of lives.

A day after donating school supplies to a local school, the headmaster informed the local ANA commander, Muhammad Akbar, 3rd BANA executive officer, of a large cache of ammunition and weapons in the area. Using the information, the ANA executed a mission plan and worked with American soldiers to safely destroy the cache.



3rd BANA soldiers refill their AK-47 magazines after a live fire exercise outside the city of Orgun-E recently.

A tip by a local citizen to the ANA in Orgun-E also pointed to a land mine that was placed on a road used regularly by troops. The ANA then contacted the American Explosive Ordnance Disposal, which safely removed the mine.

The culmination of the ANA training, was the removal of a large cache of ammunition in the possession of Muhammad Ali, governor of the Paktiki Province, Jan. 22. Planned and executed by the 3rd BANA, the mission went without a problem, and the cache was destroyed outside Ali's compound.

The BANA is currently awaiting orders in Kabul before integrating with coalition forces throughout the country.

RED CROSS, from Page 1

and they trust the Red Cross name on the message. They know our messages don't get sent unless they're verified."

The emergency communication is the most important reason the Red Cross deploys with soldiers, but they have another mission.

"We help the morale of the servicemembers. Our job is to make a better quality of life for them," said Baize. "We bring some of home to the servicemembers."

The Red Cross here provides videos to check out, paper, envelopes, books and even some snack foods like popcorn.

Everything the Red Cross provides is free to all servicemembers. All items are donated from communities in the United States and other Red Cross offices.

The Red Cross is located in the Joint Personnel Readiness Center and is always open.

"We have things for the servicemembers to do aside from them sitting around doing nothing," said Baize. "We help them to forget for a second how far from home they are."

Reservists walk Bagram's high wires

By Sgt. Valerie Dey-Bolejck
109th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — All along Disney Drive, power poles are going up and high voltage power lines are being strung. The project is bringing power from the old Russian power plant through the base to the contracting office near the front gate.

There are many electricians in the Army who provide a variety of important services, day in and day out. But there is only one unit that works the high-voltage overhead lines. The 249th Engineer Battalion, a reserve unit based at Attleboro, Mass. has two small detachments with overhead power distribution and transmission specialists, the only ones in the Army.

These two detachments have only 18 members and nine volunteers have come to Bagram to install the power poles and string the wires needed to establish the main trunk line for Prime Power. Now the base electricians can tap into the lines to extend the power to wherever it may be needed.

When they arrived two months ago, waiting for them were a map and 130 cement power poles. Now there are only about 10 left to set.

Cement power poles were a new project for this unit; they had only worked with wood poles before. A wood pole weighs about 800 pounds; a cement pole weighs 3,000. Also, they can drill into a wood pole to place the arms for wires but cement poles required a whole new method. So it was a learning experience as well.

The unit had some trouble

with using local materials that are produced to different standards and they had to make adjustments to fit it in with the American products they brought with them, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jim Prescott, A Company commander.

Their two-bucket digger trucks are specialized civilian vehicles and flew with them on the trip over. The first hurdle preparing for this deployment was to actually get an air certification for their trucks. The trucks had never flown before. They had always been transported by ship.

The 249th are not activated for standard deployments but for mission-orientated deployments. Once the poles are installed and the wire is bearing an electrical load, their job here is done. Unlike most units, there is no one to replace them. With the completion of their missions, they go to another project at another base, or are released back to home until the next mission or emergency.

"It was a very good mission for the younger guys, they have learned a lot, they have grown a lot," Prescott said.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Don McRae, B Company commander agreed.

"It's a good training mission for younger kids; some don't do this in the civilian sector," he said.

The unit has been all over the world bringing power to those in need.

They have been to Korea, Egypt and recently spent an annual training installing power poles and lights for the U.S. Border Patrol in Arizona. One of their future projects is to go to Eureka, Calif. to provide electricity



Photo by Sgt. Valerie Dey-Bolejck, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Sgt. Henry "Ace" Ventura, a lineman with the 249th strings wire.

to a Native American tribe that has no power or water. Their peacetime mission also includes helping restore power after natural disasters.

Because the Army only has 18 members in the career field, they attend school with the Air Force at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

During their time off here, the team visited the Charikar orphanage. They worked to bring in supplies for the orphanage roof and have received 75 sleeping bags from home to give to the children.

A recent addition to the unit, Sgt. Scott Gervasio, explained that the 249th are good guys and it's a tight unit. His recruiter brought him in to meet the unit for a weekend drill before he enlisted. After seeing the unit in action, he joined the Army Reserves.

"I wouldn't have joined the unit, I wouldn't have joined the Army, without the camaraderie of this unit. We do everything together," he said.

Gervasio definitely thinks the unit has "left a mark" during their time in Bagram.



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

Leafs need help for the playoffs

TORONTO — The reaction was silence.

Silence, representing boredom.

In fact, it generally was so quiet in the Air Canada Centre in the first period of a stultifying Avalanche-Maple Leafs game over the weekend, you could hear the holders of Rob Blake's 10 tickets cheering each time he touched the puck — a stark contrast to the more widespread treatment the Ontario-born Colorado defenseman gets when he plays in Los Angeles.

And this was last Saturday night. Hockey Night in Canada. Leafs vs. a showcase opponent. Tickets going for a premium on Bay Street, adjacent to the arena — at least until the faceoff approached and the sellers panicked. The studio audience, so to speak, was first bored, then disgusted, especially after Colorado — with Peter Forsberg back at center and taking command in Joe Sakic's absence — woke up enough to make the game a little better than dreadful.

And the Leafs?

Well, for one thing, Pat Quinn hits 60 years old Wednesday,



Ed Belfour has had his hands full as the Leafs struggle to score.

when the Maple Leafs face the Hurricanes in Raleigh, in a rematch of last year's Eastern Conference finals.

"I feel terrific and I guess I am happy I am on the right side of the grass," Quinn said to the media in a sardonic moment after that 3-0 loss to Colorado on Saturday night. "It's just another year passing by."

Red Wings limited to 16 shots on goal

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Brett Hull was denied by goalie Martin Brodeur as he searched for goal No. 700 in the second period.

The Detroit forward thinks the officials got him and the Red Wings in the third.

Scott Niedermayer scored 3:36 into the final period, 38 seconds after the Red Wings were whistled for too many men on the ice. That call led to the only goal in the New Jersey Devils' 1-0 victory Tuesday night.

Luc Robitaille played the puck while Darren McCarty had one foot on the ice and one in the bench.

"That was the worst call I've ever seen in my whole life. What a terrible way to lose a game," Hull said. "It's just a farce. They don't know what they're doing out there. They crack down on obstruction, so we're going to call too many men on the ice in that situation, a 0-0 game. It's unbelievable."

2002 National Hockey League standings	
Eastern Conference	Western Conference
Atlantic	Central
(2) New Jersey 49 pts	(3) St. Louis 52 pts
(4) Philadelphia 50 pts	(4) Detroit 51 pts
(8) N.Y. Islanders 50 pts	(7) Chicago 51 pts
Pittsburgh 51 pts	Nashville 51 pts
N.Y. Rangers 54 pts	Columbus 51 pts
Northeast	Northwest
(1) Ottawa 51 pts	(2) Vancouver 51 pts
(5) Boston 50 pts	(5) Minnesota 51 pts
(6) Toronto 51 pts	(6) Edmonton 50 pts
(7) Montreal 52 pts	(8) Colorado 49 pts
Buffalo 49 pts	Calgary 51 pts
Southeast	Pacific
(3) Washington 52 pts	(1) Dallas 52 pts
Florida 51 pts	Anaheim 49 pts
Tampa Bay 51 pts	Phoenix 51 pts
Carolina 52 pts	San Jose 50 pts
Atlanta 50 pts	Los Angeles 51 pts

"Do you think they make these in bifocal?"

kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support