



NEWS

Afghanistan holds successful, peaceful elections in Helmand, Nimroz provinces

Story and photos by SSgt. John Jackson



HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Afghanistan successfully held its third democratic election, April 5. Saturday's vote marks the third time Afghans held a presidential election and the first time without current Afghan President Hamid Karzai's name on the ballot since the overthrow of the Taliban. President Karzai was chosen as the interim president during the 2002 Loya Jirga. During 2004, President Karzai became the first democratically elected president in Afghanistan and was re-elected for a five-year term during 2009.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Afghan National Army Soldiers put new learned skills to the test during final training exercise

Story and photos by Cpl. Joshua Young

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan - Soldiers with 4th Tolay, 6th Kandak, 4th Brigade, Afghan National Army, conducted a final training exercise for a security training program with Regional Corps Battle School aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, April 1. The two-week training program teaches the soldiers medical treatment, communication, patrolling techniques, forward operating base security and how to conduct vehicle checkpoints and operate as a quick reaction force. Afghan instructors run the entire exercise, with coalition forces in the background who provide feedback to the instructors.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Last U.S. forces leave Nimroz province, Afghan National Army ready to stand on its own

Story and photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson



FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELARAM II, Afghanistan— An estimated 7 million Afghans were able to successfully and peacefully vote in the recent Afghan national elections due to the security provided solely by Afghan National Security Forces. The ANA and other ANSF pillars stood strong, ensuring a peaceful voting process for their fellow Afghans after years of training and advising from their International Security Assistance Force partners. The ANA soldiers of 4th Brigade, 215th Corps have been trained and advised by a rotational team of Marines and sailors known as Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 4-215. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Leaving Nimroz, Combat Logistics Battalion 7 returns Marines, sailors, equipment to Camp Leatherneck

Story and photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELARAM II, Afghanistan - Marines and sailors with Combat Logistics Battalion 7 were instrumental in returning more than 302,000 pounds of equipment and supplies as well as the last of the Marines and sailors of Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 4-215 back to Camp Leatherneck from Forward Operating Base Delaram II in Nimroz province, Afghanistan, April 7 and 8. Combat Logistics Battalion 7 arrived at FOB Delaram II on the morning of April 7 and began loading all the cargo, including generators, shipping containers and heavy equipment onto their trucks in preparation for their journey back to Camp Leatherneck, the largest military base in southwestern Afghanistan. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



CLB-7 Marines, Afghan soldiers prepare to conduct communication electronics maintenance course

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Afghan National Army soldiers with the 215th Corps visited Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 7 aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, April 6, to review the training curriculum for the upcoming Communication Electronics Maintenance Course. The training is a 10-day course to establish the communication maintenance process, the fundamentals of maintenance, safety and basic maintenance of the two main types of radio equipment used by the ANA. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

All in a day's work: HMH-466 transports troops for training, provides aerial reconnaissance

Story and photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan - The powerful blades of a CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 transformed the cool morning breeze into a powerful wind as it prepared to take to the skies over Helmand province on a dark, early spring morning, April 2. The Camp Bastion flightline was a beehive of activity underneath bright flood lights and fading stars as Marines performed preflight checks and aircraft started spinning up and taking off. ([Read the STORY](#))



Marine Wing Support Squadron 372 transfers authority to MWSS-274 as last wing support unit in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan – It was a cool and bright sunny morning as Marines and sailors with Marine Wing Support Squadrons 372 and 274 gathered for a transfer of authority ceremony aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Afghanistan, April 7. During the ceremony, Lt. Col. Sean C. Killeen, commanding officer, MWSS-274 assumed command from Lt. Col. Maura M. Hennigan, commanding officer, MWSS-372, as the aviation ground support unit for Regional Command (Southwest). ([Read the STORY](#))

Baton Rouge, La., native leads Marines in Helmand province, Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan

FORWARD OPERATING BASE NOLAY, Afghanistan - A team of Afghan National Army medics often receives multiple casualties, yet has only two good medical tables and one in disrepair on which to treat patients. With limited resources and logistics, it's difficult to increase their potential casualty-care capacity. Petty Officer 1st Class David Morales, the senior enlisted medical advisor with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215, and Navy Lt. j.g. James M. Nicholson, medical advisor for the medical team with 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, ANA, noticed their limited ability to treat patients, so they turned to Gunnery Sgt. Guadalupe E. Pineda III for help. ([Read the STORY](#))



Harlingen, Texas, native serves second combat deployment in Sangin, Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan



FORWARD OPERATING BASE SABIT QADAM, Afghanistan – Four years ago, Sgt. Troy Garza, then a fire team leader with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan. By the end of the deployment, his platoon was rendered nearly combat ineffective due to the number of casualties they sustained. With fearsome prior experience, Garza returned to Sangin during March 2014 and is currently serving with Charley Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Las Vegas native gets his chance to fight War on Terrorism

Story and photos by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SABIT QADAM, Afghanistan – Earned by few, envied by many, the title Marine appeals to individuals in several different ways. The prestige of the Marine Corps especially appealed to one individual when he enlisted at the age of 17. “There are a lot of people who have given their lives for this country,” said Lance Cpl. Kyler Nielson, a rifleman and mine sweeper with Charley Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. “I feel like it is my duty to serve my country as an able and physically fit individual.” [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Marine NCO discusses mission, sets example for junior Marines

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan – General Bernard Montgomery once said, “My own definition of leadership is this: the capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence.” While many people may have their own definitions of leadership, Gen. Montgomery describes a particular Marine noncommissioned officer serving with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261 deployed to Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Afghanistan. Born and raised in Navarre, Fla., Sgt. Josiah M. Fox was the first person in his family to become a United States Marine. Having previously served a tour in Iraq and a tour with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, this is his first deployment to Afghanistan. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

PHOTOS

Deployed Marines receive care packages from San Diego Padres

Photos by Cpl. Joshua Young



Marines with Marine Aerial Refueler Transportation Squadron 352 hold up care packages they received from the San Diego Padres aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Afghanistan, April 11, 2014.

[\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)

VIDEO

Interview of Maj. Gen. Mark A. Clark, MARSOC commander, for 2014 Leadman Triathlon-Afghanistan

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young

Major Gen. Mark A. Clark, the commander of United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, speaks about the 2014 Leadman Triathlon "Afghanistan Edition" held aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, April 13, 2014. The triathlon included rowing, cycling and running and was held for the MARSOC foundation and in honor of Master Sgt. Aaron Torian, who was killed in combat operations earlier this year. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Lt. Col. Tres Smith, CO of HMLA-369, for 2014 Leadman Triathlon-Afghanistan

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young



Lt. Col. Tres Smith, from Golden, Colo., the commanding officer of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, speaks about the 2014 Leadman Triathlon "Afghanistan Edition" held aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, April 13, 2014. The triathlon included rowing, cycling and running and was held for the MARSOC foundation and in honor of Master Sgt. Aaron Torian, who was killed in combat operations earlier this year. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

Deployed Marines Run Triathlon in Honor of MARSOC Foundation B-ROLL

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young

Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, participate in the 2014 Leadman Triathlon "Afghanistan Edition" aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, April 13, 2014. The Marines ran the triathlon in honor of the MARSOC foundation and Master Sgt. Aaron Torian, a MARSOC Marine who was killed in combat operations earlier this year. The event included rowing, cycling and running. The American edition is being held in Tempe, Ariz. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))



Service members Reflect on Time at Forward Operating Base Nolay

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young



Marines and sailors with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215 reflect on their service aboard Forward Operating Base Nolay, in the Sangin Valley, Helmand province, Afghanistan. The service members are in order: Lt. j.g. Nicholson, Col. Christopher Douglas, Capt. Joe Dewson, Maj. Scott Shadforth, Master Gunnery Sgt. Paul McGowan, Lance Cpl. Brandon Goggans, Gunnery Sgt. Chad Valois, Lance Cpl. Hunter Meade, Gunnery Sgt. Guadalupe Pineda III, and Petty Officer 3rd Class Kristopher Krysa. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))

Navy Team Prepares Afghan Medics to Operate Independently

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young

A small team of sailors has been tasked with empowering Afghans to stand on their own as coalition forces draw down and transition full security responsibility in the Sangin Valley. The sailors, Lt. j.g. James M. Nicholson, Petty Officer 1st Class David Morales and Petty Officer 3rd Class Kristopher Krysa, all with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215, are continuing to build rapport and trust with the Afghan medics to ensure a positive working relationship is maintained. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))



Marine Capt. Theo Martin

Video by SSgt. John Jackson



Marine Capt. Theo Martin talks to a KATU-TV reporter, in Portland, Ore., about his time deployed to Forward Operating Base Delaram II and about his unit's duties helping with the daily operations and training of the Afghan National Army during their deployment to Nimroz province, Afghanistan.

[\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

Marine Sgt. Jesse Barton

Video by SSgt. John Jackson

Marine Sgt. Jesse Barton talks to a WGRZ-TV reporter in Buffalo, N.Y., about his time deployed to Forward Operating Base Delaram II and about his unit's duties helping with the daily operations and training of the Afghan National Army during their deployment to Nimroz province, Afghanistan. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



To see more news, videos and photos of Regional Command (Southwest) Marines, sailors, soldiers, airmen and our coalition partners, please visit our Facebook page by clicking below.

