

CAMPAIGN NEWS DIGEST

MARCH 2008

ISAF UPDATE

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE (ISAF) SOLDIERS are giving humanitarian aid to the local population in Afghanistan.

ISAF doctors are vaccinating children against meningitis at the hospital in Herat. ISAF soldiers are providing supplies and medical aid to children in a local orphanage and Spanish doctors are giving weekly medical check-ups there too. Additionally, many Afghans regularly visit the ISAF hospital for treatment. Recently, ISAF soldiers opened a medical clinic in Quipcak Village.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are working in Afghanistan's provinces to provide security and to help reconstruct the country. The Spanish-led PRT is working to improve the living conditions of the people in Badghis Province. The team has also worked to improve the local public health system. The Kunduz PRT conducted winter relief actions for many families in the town of Lala Maydan, providing food such as, tea, sugar, rice and cooking oil. This relief effort was funded by the German Federal Government.

ISAF is already planning further actions for the future.

ARMY KNOWLEDGE ONLINE

SOLDIERS now have access to Army chat forums within the Army Knowledge Online intranet. These online chat forums aim to bring Army soldiers together, and give them a place where they can exchange ideas with other soldiers. These online communities were developed by the Battle Command Knowledge System, and were piloted three and a half years ago at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

There are various online forums which soldiers can choose on the basis of their professional interests. For example, soldiers can share information about operating procedures in Iraq and Afghanistan. They can talk openly about their experiences, and exchange opinions with other soldiers who have had similar experiences.

Ultimately, the Army plans to use the information gained from these forums to benefit soldiers when new policies are being made.

TANK UPGRADE

ARMY TECHNICIANS are modifying the M1-A2 Abrams tanks in the Multi-National Division-Baghdad. These standard tanks are currently used for military operations on urban terrain in Baghdad.

Technicians are installing the Tank Urban Survival Kit (TUSK) to the standard tanks to increase their safety and effectiveness. Firstly, the TUSK has a new driver's safety seat. It also has improved armour which will better protect soldiers from their surroundings. Finally, new visual aids and a sniper rifle mounted to the tank will help tankers identify their enemies with greater precision.

These new safety features will make missions safer, because tankers will be able to focus on the mission instead of on their weapons and equipment.

UN POLICE IN TRAINING

INTERNATIONAL POLICE TRAINERS will take part in a conference at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana next week. Representatives from the UN Police Division, Ghana's Inspector General of Police and the German Ambassador will also attend the five-day conference. They are meeting to coordinate plans for pre-deployment training for UN police.

Thousands of United Nations police will soon serve in the joint peacekeeping mission in Darfur. The joint UN-African Union peacekeeping force will be the largest UN Police contingent ever, with more than 6400 officers.

Norwegian officers are already training Nigerian police personnel for the UN-African Union peacekeeping force. Trainers from Norway and colleagues from South Africa and Botswana will work with Nigerian officers to plan the training.

ISAF Vaccinates Children, Donates School Supplies in Ghowr Province, *NATO Press Release*, February 2, 2008
<http://www.nato.int/shape/index.htm>

Noel, Kristen, Soldiers' Online Chats Produce Valuable Army Knowledge, Colonel Says American Forces Information Service, February 15, 2008.
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2008/02/mil-080215-afps03.htm>

Campbell, April, Modified M1-A2 Abrams Tanks Improve Safety, Precision, *Army News Service*, February 19, 2008
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2008/02/mil-080219-arnews01.htm>

UN Police Trainers to Meet in Ghana to Discuss Plans for Darfur Force, *UN News Service* February 15, 2008
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2008/02/mil-080215-unnews02.htm>

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Student Worksheet

Task 1: pre-reading vocabulary

Before reading the articles, match the words on the left to the definitions on the right.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 orphanage | a) generally used and accepted as normal |
| 2 check-up | b) in the end |
| 3 treatment | c) all the things that are present in one place |
| 4 to fund | d) a separate unit usually smaller than a platoon that has a special mission |
| 5 to access | e) to be able to use something |
| 6 to exchange | f) an institution for the care of children who have lost their parents |
| 7 ultimately | g) to be useful or helpful |
| 8 to benefit | h) relating to towns or cities |
| 9 standard | i) medical care |
| 10 urban | j) a general physical examination |
| 11 surroundings | k) to provide the money for something that costs a lot |
| 12 contingent | l) to give and receive |

Task 2: comprehension check

Write short answers to the following questions:

- 1 What kind of medical assistance are ISAF doctors giving to Afghans?
- 2 What actions are the Provincial Reconstruction Teams taking to help Afghans?
- 3 What is an online chat forum?
- 4 What are the benefits of the online chat forums?
- 5 What is the TUSK ?
- 6 What are the new safety features?
- 7 What are the advantages of these new safety features ?
- 8 What is the purpose of the conference in Ghana ?

Task 3: discussion

The first article in this month's Campaign News Digest is about a NATO mission in Afghanistan. You are going to research a NATO Press Release. Be prepared to give a formal presentation about this report.

Task 4: writing

One of the stories in this month's Campaign News Digest is about an online chat forum. Look at postings from the NATO REVIEW website and the Afghan Association Blogwriters website

Write a posting of about 300 words to an imaginary online chat forum. Describe a recent work experience you have had.

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Teacher's Notes

Task 1: pre-reading vocabulary

Before reading the articles, match the words on the left to a definition on the right. Encourage students to try to deduce the meaning of the words from the context using clues from the text.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1 orphanage | f) an institution for the care of children who have lost their parents |
| 2 check-up | j) a general physical examination |
| 3 treatment | i) medical care |
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| 9 to exchange | l) to give and receive |
| 10 ultimately | b) in the end |
| 11 to benefit | g) to be useful or helpful |
| 12 contingent | d) a separate unit usually smaller than a platoon that has a special mission |

Task 2: comprehension check: short answer questions

Write short answers to the following questions.

- 1 They are vaccinating children, giving medical check-ups, and operating a medical clinic.
- 2 They provide security, do reconstruction work, and give aid to the local inhabitants.
- 3 The TUSK is a Tank Urban Survival Kit that is installed to M1-A2 Abrams tanks to increase their safety.
- 4 It has a new driver's seat, improved armour, new visual aids, and a sniper rifle.
- 5 The armour is safer, the visual aids and rifle will improve effectiveness.
- 6 It is an online community where soldiers can talk to each other about their professional experiences.
- 7 Soldiers can talk openly about their experiences, and the Army will use the information to benefit soldiers.
- 8 The attendees are meeting to plan pre-deployment training for the UN Police for their mission in Darfur.

Task 3: discussion

The aim of this exercise is to develop oral reporting skills. Ask your students to access the NATO website: <http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/pressreleases/2008/index.html>. Here they will find NATO press releases reporting current events in Afghanistan. Alternatively, if you do not have access to the Internet in your classroom, you could access the site, print out the press releases yourself, and give each student a printout of a press release.

Ask your students to identify the key information in the text, make notes, and then use their notes to give a summary of the report to the class. Encourage the rest of the class to ask questions at the end of each presentation.

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Remind your students to answer the questions *Who, What, When, Where* and *Why* in their summaries. Encourage them to focus on fluency, rather than read their notes.

You may want to review reported speech before students report their press releases.

For error correction, you could take notes of the significant errors made on a sheet of paper. After all of the students have given their presentations, photocopy the compilation of errors and give it to the students as a worksheet. Ask the students to correct the errors individually, or in pairs, before you feedback as a class

To extend this activity, you may want to input key lexical features or phrases that we use in the news.

To practise listening skills, you could do this same exercise using recorded news briefs. You can find several short news segments at the ISAF website: <http://www.nato.int/isaf/index.html>

Alternatively, for more advanced students, or for additional speaking practice, ask your students to access the NATO website: <http://www.nato.int/isaf/index.html>.

Ask them to choose one of the profiles about NATO in Afghanistan listed below. Alternatively, if you do not have the Internet in your classroom, you could access the site yourself, print out the profiles, and give each student a printout of a profile. Instruct your students to research the mission and report their findings in a formal presentation.

If necessary, you may want to review oral presentation skills before the students organize their presentation.

<http://www.nato.int/issues/isaf/index.html> (ISAF mission)

<http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/mandate/index.html> (ISAF mandate)

<http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/chronology/index.html> (A history of NATO in Afghanistan)

<http://www.nato.int/isaf/topics/expansion/index.html> (The expansion of NATO in Afghanistan)

<http://www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/index.html> (An overview of NATO in Afghanistan)

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/ops.htm>.

Task 4: writing

The aim of the exercise is to practice narrative writing skills.

As a lead in, tell your students that the writer of this 'Penlog' was the 'Reporters Without Borders' prize winner for the freedom of expression blog. He founded and organized the Afghan Association Blogwriters, a network of Afghan bloggers who share their ideas and experiences in English. The Afghan founder states that through this exchange, "Afghans can practice free speech and build the way to democracy."

Ask your students to look at these websites for ideas:

Afghanpenlog: <http://afghanpenlog-en.blogspot.com>

NATO REVIEW: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2008/02/PHOTO/EN/index.htm>

If you do not have access to the Internet, you could access the websites, print out the text yourself, and give each student a printout. Ask your students to use these printouts as a model for their writing.

Ask your students to write a posting of about 300 words to an imaginary online chat forum. Tell them to write about a recent work experience, or tell a story about a recent work experience. Encourage them to share their ideas and feelings and ideas with an imaginary online community of colleagues.

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