

THE

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Serving Task Force Marne

A 'special breed' of pilot

Chinook maintenance test pilots last stop before combat flight

Pfc. MONICA K. SMITH
3RD CAB, 3RD INF. DIV.

CAMP STRIKER — Chinooks are big, too big to fly during the day because they make a large target for enemy fire. Occasionally though, a Chinook will be seen flying over Baghdad International Airport during daylight hours, performing maintenance test flights.

The Army is the only branch of service which requires a separate pilot to fly maintenance test flights. Maintenance test pilots are the final stop in the maintenance process.

"It's like when you drop off your car at a Chevy dealer and after they fix it they drive it around the block to make sure everything works and nothing falls off — that's what we do," said Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Kuritko, maintenance test pilot with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment.

After the mechanics have completed their maintenance work on an aircraft the test pilots perform a maintenance check that can be as simple as one flight or last two weeks depending on the extent of the maintenance work, said Kuritko.

"An engine performance check could take you two to four days," Kuritko said. "We check everything by the book. Starting with a ground run, where we crank the engine on the ground, we run the Chinook up and keep progressing all the way up to top speed checking things on our way. That's with scheduled maintenance."

Unscheduled maintenance usually



Pfc. Monica K. Smith

Chief Warrant Officer Steve Kuritko inspects the avionics closet of a Chinook Jan. 28 at the Combat Aviation Brigade flight line.

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Sgt. Ben Brody

Flower power

A Soldier from 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, patrols in Musayyib during a visit from Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, Multi-National Division – Center commander, Jan. 30.

Kalsu Idol to return for second season

SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY
2ND BCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB KALSU — After seeing how popular the original Kalsu Idol competition was, the staff at the Forward Operating Base Kalsu Mayor Cell knew they had to have a second season.

On Feb. 13, the Kalsu Morale, Welfare and Recreation department will host the second Kalsu Idol competition. Although it will not be part of a larger, Army-wide competition, it will still provide Soldiers the opportunity to compete for prizes in a format similar to the popular TV series American Idol, said 1st Lt. Andrew Shadley, MWR co-ordinator.

The decision for a sequel was cemented after the New Year's Day talent show, Shadley said. "We had 15 performers at the talent show, 14 of which sang. We realized there was a lot of singing talent here and a lot of interest

in singing, seeing as how we brought in a big crowd with that."

One of the reasons Shadley said he feels singing competitions like Kalsu Idol are so popular is it gives people a chance to see their friends perform.

"When the people they actually know, are friends with, and live with are performing they are going to want to go out," he said. "They are going to enjoy hearing their friends, enjoy their talent, enjoy something else other than what they do every other night."

Soldiers will have plenty of nights to enjoy the talent on Kalsu. The competition is set to take place over five weeks or longer, based on participation.

Like American Idol, contestants will be judged by a panel of three judges, with cuts occurring each week.

Although prizes for the winners have yet to be decided, Shadley said they will be more valuable than those won at the talent show, which included an iPod, a

digital camera and speaker system.

Shadley encouraged commanders to pass the word to their Soldiers and get them involved in the competition to represent themselves and their unit.

He also said that unlike American Idol, where contestants have to sing music chosen by the judges, Soldiers will be able to choose their own music.

Soldiers can also sing without music if they choose; however, if they have music, they should give it to the competition's disk jockeys a few days prior to their performance. Doing so will help prevent any last-minute glitches and ensure a quality performance.

Soldiers are encouraged to come out and support their peers and enjoy the show.

Soldiers interested in participating can sign up at the Kalsu Mayor Cell or call Shadley at SIPR: 670-7139. Soldiers can also email him at andrew.shadley@2bct3id.army.mil.

THE Dog Face Daily

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PILOTS: Chinook test pilots final stop in aircraft maintenance process

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occurs when a problem arises during a mission the night prior.

In those instances, maintenance is often concentrated on particular areas and not all checks require a flight.

However if the pilots don't know what caused a problem, test pilots will fly the aircraft to try and reproduce the problem in order to repair it.

"Troubleshooting is the hardest part," said Chief Warrant Officer Ron Durham, also a test pilot with Co. B, 2-3rd Avn. Regt. "Diagnosing an intermittent problem, a problem where sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't, is very hard. But it's very fulfilling; it makes me feel good when I

discover and work on a problem and then I go out there and fly it and I see that I actually fixed the problem."

There are four Chinook maintenance test pilots: Durham and Kuritko in Co. B, 2-3rd Avn. Regt., Maj. Rogers Stinson, Company B, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, and Chief Warrant Officer David Campbell, Company D, 2-3rd Avn. Regt.

The advantage of having dedicated maintenance test pilots is while other pilots handle missions, test pilots focus on maintenance, Kuritko said.

"They'll fly a mission at night and the maintenance test pilots come in the morning and see what needs to be worked on," Kuritko said. "It's funny because the other pilots think we can

fix everything. They say, 'it's messed up' and walk away from (the aircraft), but we don't have a bag of magic; it takes some work."

That work comes in the form of good test pilots whom Durham calls, "a special breed."

"You have to volunteer to be a test pilot, your company doesn't just select you," Durham said.

Although test pilots are the final stop in the maintenance process, Kuritko says the pilots who fly missions have the real final say.

"When you give it to the line pilots and they fly it down range, did they accept it or not?" Kuritko said. "You have to ask, 'Are they happy with it?' If they're happy, we're good."

SUBVERSION
 NOT ALL OF OUR ENEMIES ARE OUTSIDE THE FOB.
 BE AWARE OF LOCAL NATIONALS ON BASE!
REPORT POSSIBLE ACTS OF TERRORISM

- Picture-taking
- Video-recording
- Note-taking
- Pace-counting
- Asking questions

→

- Facilities where Soldiers congregate
- Equipment and Weapons
- Secured or Sensitive areas

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ESPIONAGE

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Bridging the information gap from Iraq to home

Safety Thought of the Day

Fatigue

- Causes
 - Stress
 - Poor diet
 - Lack of sleep
 - Poor physical condition
- Mitigation
 - Manage time effectively: Remember 15-7-2.
 - Ensure you get seven hours of sleep each day.
 - Ensure you exercise each day.
 - Reduce your caffeine intake. While it may give a quick boost, a lot of caffeine daily actually ends up having a negative effect on your energy level.
 - Drink water and eat healthy foods.
 - Catch up on your sleep debt. Take advantage of your down time to rest.



File photo

Headline Highlights

Nudist holiday flight; kidney racket scandal

Germany offers nudist flight

FRANKFURT (Reuters) — German nudists will be able to start their holidays early by stripping off on the plane if they take up a new offer from an eastern German travel firm.

Travel agency OssiUrlaub.de said it would start taking bookings from Friday for a trial nudist day trip from the eastern German town of Erfurt to the popular Baltic Sea resort of Usedom, planned for July 5 and costing 499 euros (\$735).

“It’s expensive, I know,” managing director Enrico Hess told Reuters by phone. “It’s because the plane’s very small. There’s no real reason why a flight in which one flies naked should be more expensive than any other.”

The 55 passengers will have to remain clothed until they board, and dress before disembarking, said Hess. The crew will remain clothed throughout the flight for safety reasons.

“I wish I could say we thought of it ourselves but the idea came from a customer,” Hess told Reuters by phone. “It’s an unusual gap in the market.”

Naturism, or “free body culture” (FKK) as it is known in Germany, was banned by the Nazis but blossomed again after the Second World War. “There are FKK hotels where you can go into the restaurants and shops naked, for example,” Hess said. “For FKK fans — not that I’m one of them — it’s nothing unusual.”

“I don’t want people to get the wrong idea. It’s not that we’re starting a swinger club in mid-air or something like that,” he added. “We’re a perfectly normal holiday company.”

Kidney racket shocks country

NEW DELHI (Reuters) — The uncovering of an illegal kidney transplant racket in a booming IT city has gripped India, with reports hundreds of poor laborers may have been duped or forced into donating organs to wealthy clients, including foreigners.

Hundreds of people from across northern India had their kidneys removed at a private house, which had a state-of-the-art operating theatre hidden inside, after being lured to Gurgaon, a city of hi-tech companies just outside New Delhi.

“We suspect around 400 or 500 kidney transplants were done by these doctors over the last nine years,” Mohinder Lal, Gurgaon’s police chief, told the Hindustan Times.

Several people have been arrested, including some doctors, police said.

The case, one of the largest transplant rackets reported in India in recent years, has dominated the country’s headlines and sparked calls for the government to tighten regulation of kidney transplants to stop backstreet operations as global demand rises.

“Dr. Horror” was how India’s Mail Today described the ringleader of the racket in a front-page headline on Monday. The doctor accused of heading the group may have fled the country, according to police, quoted as saying he appeared to have been tipped off. As many as 50 medical officials may have been involved in the racket. At least five foreigners — two U.S. and three Greek citizens — were found in a luxury guesthouse operated by the doctor running the racket, Lal was quoted as saying by

local media. Police said they have since been allowed to leave India.

Many victims complained they were taken to the house with promises of a job, and then duped or forced at gunpoint to sell their kidneys. Laborers, many who gathered every day in parts of Gurgaon to look for any kind of job, were offered around 50,000 rupees (\$1,250) for their kidneys. They were sold to wealthy clients for 10 times as much.

“I was approached by a stranger for a job. When I accepted, I was taken to a room with gunmen,” Mohammed Salim told NDTV television.

“They tested my blood, gave me an injection and I lost consciousness. When I woke up, I had pain in my lower abdomen and I was told that my kidney had been removed.”

Suspicious neighbors said they had noticed blood running out of the house’s gutters, as well as blood-soaked bandages and even bits of flesh thrown into an open plot near the house.

Kidney failure has become more common in rich countries, often because of obesity. But a shortage of transplant organs has fuelled a black market that exploits needy donors.

In “transplant tourism,” rich patients pay tens of thousands of dollars to receive kidneys in poor countries, where payments are typically about \$1,000 in the black market.

Illegal transplants are not new in India. Last year, police in southern India said they had uncovered evidence of illegal trade in kidneys sold by poor fishermen and their families whose livelihoods were destroyed by the Indian Ocean tsunami.

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	6	5	3					
				2			3	
			9		8			

from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to yesterday’s puzzle:

7	1	6	4	3	8	2	5	9
4	2	8	6	9	5	7	3	1
3	5	9	2	7	1	8	6	4
8	7	3	9	4	2	5	1	6
6	4	1	8	5	3	9	7	2
2	9	5	1	6	7	4	8	3
9	8	7	3	2	6	1	4	5
1	3	2	5	8	4	6	9	7
5	6	4	7	1	9	3	2	8

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Wednesday

il are-bee-ah