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Southeast Asia Air Combat Data

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Anticipated Mine Clearance Procedures:
- Use of water sprinklers to uncover mines.
- Insertion of 15-meter-long plastic pipes filled with dynamite and detonators into suspected areas (for mines up to 10 cm underground).
- Use of excavators and bulldozers to remove plants and dig up earth (for mines 20 to 30 cm underground).
- Final inspections by soldiers to ensure the removal of all mines.

More Help on the Way!
Although mine clearance and mine identification efforts in both near areas and the DMZ have thus far been limited to the military and civic groups, in January the South's Sungdo Construction Co. created the demining firm Specialist Demining Engineering (SDE) to aid the Korean and other mine-affected nations in clearance efforts. The firm's vice president, Koos G. Soo, recently said the SDE has formed a technical assistance agreement with the UK's Specialist Ground Services (SGS)—one of the world's top-10 mine and UXO clearance companies. Koos expressed to the Herald's desire to aid the Korean governments' demining efforts, saying that private firms are at an advantage over militaries when it comes to ensuring operations, gaining funding, and acquiring the most advanced equipment.

To date, no formal agreement between the private firm and the Korean government has yet to be announced. However, JCS Battle Coordination Division official Lee Kuk-soo, head of mine affairs in the division, recently told the Herald that...
been incorporated into the GIS at UXO LAO. Herbicide mission data was obtained from the U.S. Armed Services Center for Research of Unit Records (CRUR) that is also the source for substantiation of veteran’s claims of herbicide exposure. Data includes the original HERBS tapes plus man-portable, truck, and helicopter missions that were conducted during the conflict.

The partnership between the DSCA and its contractors is also in the process of developing a user-friendly informational relational database and look-up tables to better assist the end user in planning for and prioritizing bomb clearance missions in specific areas of the country. A prototype internet-accessible version of the geospatial data is also in the developmental phase and will make it easier for host nations to access the data without a major investment in information technology equipment.

The use of this kind of data, and the integration with facilitating technologies, is unprecedented and is a clear demonstration of the value that technology can play in enhancing demining efforts, reducing costs, and building cooperative efforts between nations. The skills being learned through this process and the knowledge gained will most certainly be of value in other countries and other situations. This and other like initiatives will help ensure that the world will become mine safe sooner rather than later. ■

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South Koreans are considering cooperating with SDE in clearing the estimated 20,000 mines on Mt. Chungri.  

**The End in Sight?**

When the Korean soil thaws in early spring and the demining effort continues, the Koreans will be on route to clearing a path not just through the DMZ, but through years of silence and conflict. Though we may never know of advances in clearance operations and mine awareness on the northern side of the DMZ, the North’s pledged cooperation with the South is a huge step towards reconnecting the once united peninsula. Even the People’s Republic of China has pledged technical and personnel support to both Korea’s efforts, according to the August 23, 2000 Yonhap News. It could be said that the mine situation in Korea pales in comparison to such places as Bosnia-Herzegovina or Afghanistan. Perhaps this is true from a numerical standpoint. But when one considers a country divided in two by a guarded, man-made boundary and by stark ideological differences, there are few, if any, situations to rival that of the Koreans. If, in fact, the drive to clear a path for railroad and highway construction is successful in September 2001, the joint efforts of enemies will be responsible for partially reversing in about one year what took over 50 years of animosity to create. ■

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**Pakistan: The Landmine Problem in Federally Administered Tribal Areas**

After a decade of fighting, the effects of conflict beyond Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan are seen everyday in border regions. With little government aid available, agencies like HSD are taking the initiative in the country’s battle against mines.

by Faiz Muhammad Fayyaz, Executive Director, Human Survival & Development (HSD)

The ravages of the decade-long armed conflict in Afghanistan between the Soviets and anti-communist forces were not confined to Afghanistan. Rather, its ill effects spilled over to neighboring countries. One effected country of note was Pakistan, which was used as a base for war activities. Pakistan served as a home to arms depots and camps for training guerrillas, and as a passage for logistic supplies and other activities for the coordination of the war effort. In addition, thousands of refugees crossed the Afghan-Pakistan border in search of safe harbor, rendering the border weaker and weaker throughout the war.

One of the most detrimental effects of the Afghan war on Pakistan was the thousands of landmines left behind in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Soviet troops dropped mines and bombs in FATA border towns in order to intimidate the local population and prevent any support of anti-communist forces. Although the Afghan war broke out in December 1979, it wasn’t until the early-1980s that the landmine problem surfaced in the FATA. Of the seven tribal Agencies of the FATA, Bajaur and Kurram were the most effected, counting an alarming number of casualties.

Bajaur and Kurram have witnessed some of the worst casualties, which affected not just soldiers but women and children, as well. An entire disabled population now exists—a change that has effected the socioeconomic fabric of the area. While the FATA was socially undervolunteered previous to the war, it has regressed further as a result of mines. The region’s inadequate health services must deal with a public health situation of tragic proportions. Agricultural land has been rendered unproductive. Once productive men responsible for earning livelihoods have not only been rendered impotolic, but have become liabilities. Children have been forced to perform hard labor and beg on the streets.

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**Assessment**

In order to assess the depth of Pakistan’s landmine problem, 1997 Nobel co-laureate Rae McGoey, an authority on landmines, visited Human Survival and Development (HSD) in the summer of 2000 at the behest of the Swiss Federation for Mine Clearance and Swiss