

# U.S. moves to stop money

WASHINGTON (AP)—Investigators have exposed several pieces of Osama bin Laden's financial network in the past two months, from honey and diamond dealers to U.S. money-wiring outfits sending millions to Somalia.

But U.S. officials concede they have a long way to go to fully disrupt the secretive empire that finances bin Laden's worldwide terrorism operation.

"I think it is not possible to know yet how many more of these kinds of organizations may exist and what other inventive mechanisms may exist that we haven't discovered yet," Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said.

The government made a major move Wednesday toward blocking the money behind the terrorists suspected in the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

President Bush announced the United States was targeting two organizations, largely underground currency exchanges known as hawalas, funneling large amounts of cash to bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

The organizations, Al Taqua and Al-Barakaat, operate in more than 40 countries, including the United States, and channel funds to al-Qaida through companies and nonprofits they run, the administration said.

Investigators believe tens of millions of dollars a year flow overseas through al-Barakaat. Much of that was sent by Somali residents of the United States to relatives, with the networks skimming money off for al-Qaida through exchange fees.

Investigators believe it works like this: Networks charge a fee to relay money, with one-fourth of the fee kept by the hawala broker who took the money in the United States and another quarter going to the receiving hawala dealer, in Somalia, for instance. The remainder, or half the fee, would be sent to the main company. That's the point where Treasury officials believe money gets funneled to al-Qaida.

A criminal complaint filed in Boston suggested some of the money leaving the United States went first to the United Arab Emirates. The money was wired in small increments below \$10,000 to escape notice by banking

regulators, officials said.

The operation was the first for Treasury's new Green Quest terrorist tracking unit.

That's not the only creative money-moving mechanism terrorism investigators have discovered.

Treasury last month identified three honey-related businesses in Yemen believed to be fronts secretly moving money for al-Qaida. The U.S. government previously linked the owner of one to the main al-Qaida base in Europe used to move money, weapons and the network's members.

Foreign officials also believe al-Qaida may be using the illegal African diamond trade to make and hide money. And some U.S. experts think bin Laden has profited from Afghanistan's opium trade.

Some believe the battle against terrorist financing may never end.

"I don't think you're ever going to know if you've destroyed it completely. It's not a physical target in the way a base is or a military target is," said Mark Lowenthal, an intelligence consultant and former staff director of the House Intelligence Committee. "You have a twofold program: One, you have to continually track the money sources, and two, once you know about them you have to disrupt them. Once you find one, you have to know there's another one."

This week, 62 entities and people were added to a list of suspected terrorist associates targeted by the United States. The earlier list included 88 groups or people whose assets were being targeted because of their ties to al-Qaida and other terrorist groups.

To date, 112 countries have issued blocking orders. The United States has frozen \$26 million in assets of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban and al-Qaida since Sept. 11; another \$17 million was blocked by other countries, bringing the global total to \$43 million, a Treasury spokeswoman said.

In coordinated raids Wednesday, Customs agents seized evidence and shut down Al-Barakaat companies in four cities: Boston, Minneapolis, Seattle and Columbus, Ohio. The Treasury Department froze assets of nine organizations and two people.



Sherman County landfill operator Dale Smith climbed into the track loader he uses to cover trash with dirt to keep it dry and keep it from blowing away.

Photo by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News

## Landfill starts taking trash four years after state order

LANDFILL, from Page 1

landfill's life. Plastic bottles with lids still in place are a problem, Way said, because they do not crush easily with the lid on, and sometimes come flying out from under the compactor like large projectiles. He said that the cardboard is hard to compact, and that it consumes a large portion of the available space, reducing the life of the cell.

Once Smith has the pile spread out and compacted, he switches to a track loader to cover the pile with six inches of dirt to keep it from blowing away and to keep it dry.

Way says the landfill is not completely finished. There will be a building to keep the loader and compactor in, and electric power has to be in-

stalled to be able to operate the monitoring wells and the special sump pump in the bottom of the cell.

Citizens will not take trash to the landfill, he said, but will continue to take it to the transfer station, where it will be collected and transported to the landfill.

With the opening of the landfill, county commissioners hope they can show some savings and be able to again cut the county solid waste fee, which people pay on their property tax bill. The last time the \$150-per-year fee was cut was in June 1997, about two months before the county was ordered to close the old landfill because of contamination found in monitoring wells.

The site is along the banks of the normally dry Sappa Creek.

# Command says war on schedule

WASHINGTON (AP) — The top U.S. commander of the war in Afghanistan defended the military's effort on Thursday, saying, "We like the progress we have had up to this point."

"It is only those who believe this should be done in two weeks' time ... who are disappointed in this," said Gen. Tommy Franks, who heads the U.S. Central Command.

In his first appearance at a Pentagon news briefing, the Army general was asked about criticism that the month-long bombing campaign has been "too timid."

"Absolutely not," Franks shot back. "We are on our time line. ... I find our progress up to this point satisfactory," he added.

Both Franks and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said the effort to topple the al-Qaida terrorist network and its Taliban protectors will continue unabated.

"This will take as long as it takes," Franks said, calling it a 24-hour-a-day effort. He refused to rule out the use of U.S. or allied ground forces in the battle.

"As we stand where we are now, we want to keep all the options open," the military commander said.

Without offering specific numbers, Franks said he believes that Taliban military forces have been torn "asunder." At a later point, he said those forces have had difficulty communicating and planning, but offered no other assessment of their combat power.

Franks said terrorist leader Osama bin Laden is not a focus of the military campaign.

"We have not said Osama bin Laden is a target of this effort," he said, adding that the main focus is on his al-Qaida terrorist network as a whole.

On Wednesday, Rumsfeld said U.S. airstrikes in Afghanistan have killed scores of Taliban and al-Qaida fighters. The terrorist network and its Taliban allies still have between 40,000 and 50,000 troops in Afghanistan, Rumsfeld said in a television interview.

Twice a day, he said, reports cross his desk detailing Taliban battlefield dead, from a half-dozen to 20 at a time.

The commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James Jones, said Thursday that the USS Peleliu, a large-deck amphibious assault ship in the Arabian

Sea, had been "pulled off station" temporarily to perform a sensitive mission. He would not provide details but said the new mission was unrelated to the war in Afghanistan. An aide said the Peleliu would remain in the same general area to do its new mission.

The Peleliu is the flagship of a three-ship Marine Expeditionary Unit carrying 2,200 Marines. Another Marine Expeditionary Unit is afloat in the Mediterranean Sea and may be preparing to head to the Arabian Sea.

For the first time in the month-long bombing campaign, Pentagon officials released a video Wednesday that depicted a human victim of the bombing. The fuzzy images from a plane's gun camera showed a figure emerge from a vehicle shortly before being obliterated by an American bomb.

In introducing the video clip showing the destructive power of the U.S. weapon, Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace said it offered a "rather unique" view of the bombing campaign.

"You'll see two vehicles, one pull up next to another. You'll see an individual walk between the two vehicles just before a guided munition destroys both vehicles," said Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On the other side, Pace said, some anti-Taliban fighters are so dedicated they have charged on horseback against Taliban tanks. American special forces troops are helping some of the rebel groups with supplies, ammunition and tactical advice.

"These folks are aggressive. They're taking the war to their enemy and ours," Pace said, citing the horseback charges against Taliban tanks as an example.

So far, the al-Qaida casualties have not included the network's leader, bin Laden, Rumsfeld said.

"We'll find him," Rumsfeld said. "On the other hand, he could show up today, dead, and I'd be delighted. But al-Qaida would still exist." Rumsfeld claimed Taliban forces are violating international law by putting troops and military equipment in schools, mosques, hospitals and other civilian sites to try to draw U.S. bombs to kill civilians.

"These people couldn't care less about international law," Rumsfeld said on PBS' "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer."

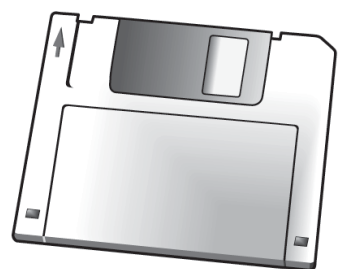
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