

## **IMMIG WAR HERO & CLAN REUNITED**

Daily News (New York)

May 14, 2012 Monday, SPORTS FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2012 Daily News, L.P.



**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 16

**Length:** 402 words

**Byline:** BY ERICA PEARSON NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

### **Body**

---

AN AFGHAN IMMIGRANT paralyzed while working as a Navy translator has a new gig: interpreting for his wife and kids, reunited with him in Queens after a lawmaker cut through red tape.

"Before, I was always away from them," Jamil Patkik

said as his youngest son, Abdul, 5, cuddled on his lap. "Now we'll be together forever."

Patkik's wife and four kids had been approved to come to New York by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services but languished for

10 months on a waiting list in Pakistan.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) got involved and convinced the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan to issue visas for Patkik's family, who finally arrived last month.

Patkik, 33, a U.S. citizen, was desperate for them to join him in Flushing because he needs his wife's help with daily activities.

A civilian combat translator, he was paralyzed from the waist down in a deadly 2010 Black Hawk chopper crash in Afghanistan's Zabul Province.

Nine Americans, including four SEALs

with whom Patkik worked closely, died in the accident.

"I thank Mr. Patkik for his heroic service and sacrifice to our country and will continue to assist his family," Gillibrand said.

Patkik's wife, Naseem, said she's overjoyed the

clan is together again. The kids have started school

and are learning a new language.

"I'm translating English for them," said Patkik, smiling.

## IMMIG WAR HERO &amp; CLAN REUNITED

Patkik first immigrated to Queens in 2000 from Pakistan, where his family relocated during the Soviet-Afghan war.

He met and married his wife during a visit to family in Islamabad. She and their kids stayed there while he split his time between the U.S. and Pakistan.

Friends told him military contractors were looking for Pashto speakers, and in 2008 he tried out.

Patkik was placed with U.S. Army Special Forces and then with the SEALs.

He was frightened during his first mission, when insurgents fired on their helicopter as it landed.

"That was like a movie to me," he said.

The danger became routine.

He signed up for three tours, despite his wife's misgivings.

Patkik remembers little about the terrible accident that changed his life and killed his friends.

"We were pretty close to landing the helicopter. I was getting ready to pick up my backpack," he said. "The next thing I remember, I was on the ground. About 30 feet away, I saw the helicopter burning."

The fall broke his back and damaged his spinal cord; he was one of three to survive.

"I was lucky," he said.

[epearson@nydailynews.com](mailto:epearson@nydailynews.com)

## Graphic

---

Navy translator Jamil Patkik, with his four children who, along with his wife, have just rejoined him in Queens after visa issues, was paralyzed when his chopper was shot down in Afghanistan in 2010. Photo by David Handschuh/Daily News

## Classification

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** Newspaper

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION (90%); PARALYSIS (90%); SPINAL CORD INJURIES (89%); MARRIAGE (78%); PASSPORTS & VISAS (78%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); DEATH & DYING (78%); ARMIES (78%); FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION (78%); REBELLIONS & INSURGENCIES (78%); ARMED FORCES (73%); DEFENSE CONTRACTING (73%); US ARMY (73%); CHILDREN'S MARKET (73%); LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (73%); APPROVALS (72%); ACCIDENTAL FATALITIES (72%); AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS (72%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (70%); BACK DISORDERS & INJURIES (60%)

**Organization:** US CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SERVICES (57%)

IMMIG WAR HERO & CLAN REUNITED

**Industry:** HELICOPTERS (87%); ARMIES (78%); MILITARY HELICOPTERS (78%); ARMED FORCES (73%); DEFENSE CONTRACTING (73%); US ARMY (73%); CHILDREN'S MARKET (73%); DEFENSE INDUSTRY (73%); AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS (72%)

**Person:** KIRSTEN E GILLIBRAND (57%)

**Geographic:** NEW YORK, NY, USA (73%); ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN (57%); NEW YORK, USA (92%); PAKISTAN (94%); UNITED STATES (94%); AFGHANISTAN (93%)

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2012

---

End of Document