THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

Vol. 1, No. 4 | Published by Multi-National Force - Iraq | September 7, 2005

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Reeves

Col. Sa'adi, commander of 1st Brigade, 8th Division Iraqi Army accepts the "key" to Forward Operating Base Hotel, Najaf, from Lt. Col. James E. Oliver, commander of 1st Battalion 198th Armor, signifying the transfer of authority from Coalition Forces to the Iraqi Security Forces of Najaf.

Iraqi Army takes control of 'Hotel' base in Najaf

By Multi-National Force - West Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU — A ceremony celebrating the transfer of authority of Forward Operating Base Hotel and the anniversary of the end of hostile activities in Najaf was held at Forward Operating Base Hotel yesterday.

Members of 1st Battalion, 198th Armor, 155th Brigade Combat Team, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) transferred authority of FOB Hotel, Najaf, Iraq, to the 1st Brigade, 8th Division of the Iraqi Army. Coalition Force dignitaries, Iraqi Army commanders and Iraqi government officials were in attendance.

"It is a great day for the people of Najaf and the nation of Iraq. We have trained and worked long hours to reach this moment," said Col. Sa'adi, commander, 1st Brigade, 8th Division of the Iraqi Army.

The 1st Bn., 198th Armor has assisted the people of Najaf since mid-January. Thirty-one projects, costing approximately $7.5 million, were funded to support the Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee. The projects included water and sanitation, education, transportation, humanitarian assistance, telecommunications, law and governance.

There are currently 75 projects emphasizing electricity, water, sanitation and healthcare in progress, totaling $37.8 million.

See *NAJAF,* Page 4

Top Stories

Iraqi governors from four provinces hold conference in Kirkuk, *Page 3*

Bomb maker captured near Hit, *Page 8*

Iraqi Police conduct raid in Bayji, *Page 10*

Georgia Soldiers detain terrorists, find weapons cache, *Page 10*

Coalition Operations: Across Iraq, *Page 14*

Kirkuk orphans swing on new playground donated by Coalition, *Page 21*

Combat Engineers find, destroy enemy weapons, *Page 22*

Iraqis Taking the Lead: photos from around the country *Page 25*

United Commitment

By Gen. George W. Casey, Jr.
Multi-National Force - Iraq Commanding General

Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

On behalf of the Multi-National - Forces in Iraq, our thoughts and prayers go out to the citizens of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama who were victims of Hurricane Katrina. Members of the Louisiana 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the Mississippi 155th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and units from the Alabama National Guard are serving with us now and many have experienced personal losses. Right now we are looking at ways to accelerate the rotations of those Guardsmen who are due to rotate out this month by a week or so to get them back home faster. However, we all realize our mission in Iraq is first priority.

Speaking of that mission, there continues to be positive signs in Iraq that our work here is paying off. Just yesterday, the city of Najaf held its one-year liberation celebration. At that ceremony Forward Operating Base Hotel was returned to the Iraqi Army. The Najaf one-year celebration is significant because it highlights what is going right across all of Iraq. Since last August we have completed 370 reconstruction projects in Najaf. These projects include 174 water and sewer projects, 18 health-care projects including reopening the medical teaching and pharmaceutical facilities of the Najaf Teaching Hospital, and three electric projects. The tremendous success in Najaf illustrates what can be accomplished throughout the country with a peaceful environment.

Finally, I would like to recognize the departure of a true warrior, and the arrival of another. Tomorrow, Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq, relinquishes command to Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey. Under general Petraeus' leadership Iraqi Security Forces number nearly 190,000 and are well on their way to the ultimate goal of creating a unified, stable and democratic Iraq. I know that same record of success will continue under general Dempsey. Until next week … "Iltizam Mushtarak" — United Commitment!

Service members feel pain of Hurricane Katrina's aftermath

By Lt. Col. Steven A. Boylan
Combined Press Information Center

INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD — Even though over 138,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are deployed to Iraq supporting the birth of a new nation, we are stunned and awed by the devastation that has occurred back home and let there be no doubt that we feel the effects here as well.

There are more than 7,000 service members here who are from the effected states and we know that there is great concern for their well-being and our thoughts and prayers go out to each one.

Many would not think that we have the time to focus on what is happening thousands of miles away, but we do for any number of reasons. Our families and friends are back there and what happens there, effects us here.

As with the relief efforts taking place at home, people here have started to do what they can. In some cases, commanders have granted emergency leave to those that they can to ensure they meet the needs of the service member and their family. This has to be balanced with the needs of the security mission here in Iraq.

The other area people here have taken to lending their support is in donations to the various organizations that are helping in the relief efforts. Donations have already begun to be taken at various locations here in Iraq at the embassy and other unit locations.

Just as the public back home is helping, we know that people are in need and can use our help. This time what we can do most is offer our prayers and thoughts that everyone receives the assistance needed and hope that the conditions improve as quickly as possible.

No matter where you find members of the military, they are there to lend their support where they can, when they can, even in the middle of a war.

MNF-I Commanding General
Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Combined Press Information Center Director
Lt. Col. Steven A. Boylan
steven.boylan@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief
Maj. Patricia C. Anderson
patricia.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

Editor.....Staff Sgt. Brett B. McMillan
brett.mcmillan@iraq.centcom.mil

Assistant Editor.....Staff Sgt. Nick Minecci
nicholas.minecci@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information NCOIC...Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds
michele.hammonds@iraq.centcom.mil

This Week in Iraq is an authorized publication produced by Multi-Nationa Force - Iraq. Contents are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is not the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at ***MNFInewsletter@iraq.centcom.mil***.

Iraqi governors from four provinces hold conference at Iraqi Army's Kirkuk facility

Story and photo by
Capt. Monte Hibbert
116th Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK — Governors from the Iraqi provinces of Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, Diyala and Saladin met Aug. 24 at the Iraqi Army's K-1 military installation near Kirkuk to discuss issues affecting north-central Iraq.

Governors Mustafa Abdulrahman of Kirkuk, Dana Ahmed Majid of Sulaymaniyah, Raad Rashid Mullah Jowad of Diyala and Deputy Governor Abdulla Hasan Jobara of Saladin represented their provinces at the meeting. Top Coalition leaders from the region were also present at the event, including 42nd Infantry Division Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto and 116th Brigade Combat Team Commander Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart, as well as the commanders of sister units in the 42nd division.

The conference included morning and afternoon sessions followed by an afternoon press conference. At least 13 regional media outlets attended the press conference, where questions focused on Article 58 of Iraq's transitional administrative law, elections and security.

Kirkuk Governor Mustafa Abdulrahman speaks with 116th Brigade Combat Team Commander Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart (right) after a press conference at the Iraqi Army's K-1 military installation near Kirkuk Aug. 24.

According to attendees, all of the governors agreed on the need for action on Article 58 to find a solution for displaced Iraqis. They were vocal in encouraging citizens to participate in the elections and discussed plans for the establishment of a coordinated emergency information hotline between all four provinces.

Security for the conference was provided by the Iraqi Army's 2nd Brigade, 4th Division, the unit headquartered at the facility.

Supporting the democratic process and open public communication by Iraqi elected leaders is part of the 116th BCT's mission while deployed in north central Iraq. The unit's mission also includes assisting Iraq's new government, supporting economic development, facilitating communications and improving security and stability in the region.

The 116th BCT comprises headquarters and staff sections, two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a support battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. The 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

Aiming to secure a future

Iraq Army Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 8th Division participate in a "Shoot House" Live Fire Weapons Training exercise at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Iskandariyah, Iraq on July 30.

U.S. Navy Photo by Chief Photographer's Mate Edward G. Martens

This week, Ad Diwaniyah province started a power network project in part of Um Alkhail that created 40 jobs for 2,500 beneficiaries. In addition, it started another power network project in Al Akrad and created 85 temporary jobs benefiting 1,600 Iraqis.

Iraqis set to take bigger role in election security

Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — The Multi-National Corps – Iraq commanding general held an interview with the Pentagon Press Corps Friday extolling the efforts of the Iraqi Security Forces and announcing that they'll be taking the larger role in securing the upcoming Iraqi national elections.

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. John Vines told members of the press corps only 2,000 more U.S. troops would be needed to bolster security for the scheduled Dec. 15 elections. "Gen. Casey (Multi-National Force – Iraq commanding general) has requested two additional battalions from the 82nd Airborne Division to assist in the upcoming elections. Based on the national elections that took place in January, we anticipate insurgents will attempt to intimidate voters and deprive them of the opportunity to vote. We think this is prudent," Vines said.

Because of the ever-increasing numbers of trained Iraqi Security Forces, the amount of extra U.S. forces will be substantially smaller than what was used during the January elections of this year. "The primary security for this referendum and the national election, which will be Dec. 15 will be provided for by Iraqi Security Forces," he said.

During the interview, Vines also fielded questions about the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and the effect it's having on the deployed forces in Iraq.

When asked by a member of the press corps if there were any steps being taken to allow troops affected by the hurricane to return home, Vines replied, "As you know, people are not being allowed back into the devastated areas. The problem is that the security mission goes on here, and if we take some out, those that are left are at some risk; it increases their risk.

"Unfortunately, we're not able at this time — unless someone is known to have a family member wounded or injured or killed — to make those adjustments. We'll continually monitor that."

The general followed on saying U.S. forces in Iraq are going to great lengths to identify numbers and places service members can call to either get in contact with their families, noting that in some cases it's proving difficult. "It is a case-by-case basis, and commanders have the flexibility to do the right thing by the Soldiers," he said.

Vines closed the interview by saying that occasionally people read there's not been much progress in Iraq, "but I would remind your listeners that there was no sovereign government about 15 months ago. There was no transitional assembly. There was no draft constitution. There were no ministries of defense, electricity, oil, water or interior. Those are all in place and functioning at varying levels of capacity, but they're functioning.

"Sixty years ago this month, the terms of surrender were signed in Tokyo Bay. As horrific as that war was, perhaps the direct threat to the continental United States was not as great as it is today.

"Young men and women over here and other parts of the globe are protecting America and other countries from terrorists who wish to attack us and, if given the opportunity, will. I'm proud to serve with them. I'm proud of what they do, and I hope your listeners are, too."

A little to the right ...

U.S. Navy photo by Chief Photographer's Mate Edward G. Martens

U.S. Army Spc. John Young from Scottsdale, Arizona, instructs Iraqi Army personnel attached to the 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 8th Division in a Live Fire Weapons Training exercise at the Iraqi Army Compound at Forward Operating Base Iskandariyah recently. Young is a member of the U.S. Army Multi-National Training team, part of the 155th Brigade Combat Team, who provides this type of training to assist in the proficiency of Iraqi Army Soldiers.

Najaf

from page 1

The Commander's Emergency Response Program, which focuses on emergency repairs of critical facilities and infrastructure shortfalls, funded 227 projects at a cost of $6 million.

"Over the past several months we have witnessed a new birth of freedom and prosperity in this great city and believe that Najaf will continue to grow and flourish under the protection of the Iraqi Security Forces represented here today," said Lt. Col. James E. Oliver, commander, 1st Battalion, 198th Armor and Coalition Forces in Najaf.

"The Iraqi Security Forces of Najaf are well-trained, professional and dedicated to the protection and well being of the citizens of this city."

The 1st Battalion, 198th Armor will relocate to bases throughout the 155th BCT area of operations. Sufficient forces will be available to offer any assistance requested by the Iraqi Security Forces in control of Najaf and the surrounding area.

The 155th BCT is a U.S. Army unit assigned to the II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Iraqi Police receive basic trauma care training

Story by Capt. David Hamilton
550th Area Support Medical Company

CAMP TAJI — "Nafiss and Nazif! Nafiss and Nazif!" said Col. John J. Lammie to the 20 Iraqi policemen in a training session at the Al Taji IP Station north of Baghdad.

Those Arabic terms for "breathing" and "bleeding" were often repeated during the Basic Trauma Treatment course taught by Lammie, a medical doctor from Fayetteville, N.C.

Lammie was joined by other doctors, nurses and medics of the 550th Area Support Medical Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, Division Support Brigade as they taught IPs how to medically respond during emergencies.

The medics of the 550th ASMC who deployed here from Fort Bragg, N.C., to support the 3rd Infantry Division have teamed with 4th Platoon, 860th Military Police Company of the California Army National Guard.

The MPs patrol with and mentor four IP stations in the communities surrounding Camp Taji.

Along with conducting daily patrols to the stations, the MPs also have the mission of providing classes to the local IPs on various subjects including medical life-saving measures.

Photos courtesy 550th ASMC

Sgt. Cristen M. Kwiatkowski, left, a combat medic with the 550th ASMC, Brigade Troops Battalion, Division Support Brigade, observes as Iraqi police officers go through patient treatment procedures at Camp Taji.

Col. John J. Lammie, left, a doctor with the 550th ASMC, observes as Iraqi police officers go through patient treatment procedures.

The 550th ASMC medics seized the opportunity of the daily visits to provide much-needed first aid and basic trauma training to the IPs, who are often first on the scene of terrorist attacks.

The training was recently conducted in 17 classes at the four IP stations and one IP checkpoint.

More than 170 Iraqi policemen were taught such basics as airway control, rescue breathing, chest wound dressings, bleeding control, tourniquets, burn treatment and transporting the wounded.

1st Lt. Ronald Leach, a physician assistant with the 550th, planned the final training event using a scenario exercise.

Some of the IPs were spread throughout the station, role-playing as casualties, while teams of three policemen responded to their "wounded" partners, assessed their injuries, and treated them.

"They were very enthusiastic," said Leach.

He said IPs did a great job evaluating casualties and providing the proper care.

Leach said future training will include teaching the policemen how to transport casualties in IP vehicles as well as how to coordinate with local medical clinics to develop training relationships and access to ambulance services.

Iraqi Air Force gives Iraqi Army a lift

IRBIL — The 23rd Air Transport Squadron of the Iraqi Air Force flew a battalion of Iraqi Army Soldiers from Irbil to Tall Afar Aug. 28 through 29 in support of a repositioning of forces for counter insurgency operations in the western Ninawah province.

Three Iraqi C-130 Hercules aircraft each airlifted a full complement of Soldiers from the 2nd Iraqi Army Division on a two-day mission designed to reposition combat assets.

This is the first use of the new Iraqi Air Force to directly support the deployment of Iraqi combat forces inside of Iraq.

Two Water Projects started this week in the Basrah Province. The Al Ashaar water network will provide 250,000 gallons of potable water daily to more than 500,000 Iraqis. The Abo Al Kaseb water main network will provide 150,000 gallons of potable water daily to more than 3,000 Iraqis.

Heroes of the Week

116th BCT Soldiers garner mention in presidential speech

By Capt. Monte Hibbert
116th Brigade Combat Team

President George W. Bush mentioned six 116th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers by name in a speech about the war on terrorism delivered in Nampa, Idaho, Aug. 24 to a crowd of military families and dignitaries.

Brothers 1st Lt. Eric (TF 2-116 Armor), Spc. Evan (145th SB), Spc. Greg (TF 1-148 Field Artillery) and Spc. Jeff (TF 2-116 Armor) Pruett were mentioned along with Spc. Matthew Salisbury (216th MI) and Spc. Charles Glenn (TF 2-116 Armor) all are current members of the 116th BCT deployed in Iraq.

The speech was intended to thank military members and families of the Idaho National Guard and the Air Force's 366th Wing based at nearby Mountain Home Air Force Base. The event was also attended by Idaho's U.S. congressional delegation, Idaho's governor, and a host of other state and civic leaders. The president's remarks were meant to remind the nation of the importance of fighting the war against terrorism.

"Idaho now has a higher percentage of its Guard forces mobilized than any other state," Bush remarked. "At this moment, more than 1,700 Soldiers of the Idaho Guard are serving in Iraq. It's the largest Guard mobilization in the history of Idaho."

Bush thanked the military families for their sacrifices and used the Pruett brother's family as an example of a Guard family who supports one another and the cause of freedom.

"There are few things in life more difficult than seeing a loved one go off to war. And here in Idaho, a mom named Tammy Pruett … knows that feeling six times over," Bush said. "Tammy has four sons serving in Iraq right now with the Idaho National Guard — Eric, Evan, Greg and Jeff. Last year, her husband, Leon, and another son, Eren, returned from Iraq, where they helped train Iraqi firefighters in Mosul."

"America lives in freedom because of families like the Pruetts," he said.

President Bush reemphasized the nation's three-part strategy in the war against terrorism — defending the homeland, going after terrorists where they live and spreading the hope of freedom. He quoted Salisbury's observations during the January elections to illustrate how the spark of freedom has been ignited in Iraq.

"Spc. Matt Salisbury is with us today. He helped provide security for the election," Bush said. "He described seeing an Iraqi family helping an elderly man to the polls vote that day. Is it all right if I quote you?

"'The pride radiating from his face was unmistakable,' Matt said. 'With one act, he recovered his dignity which had been stolen by a tyrant. How can I possibly describe the return of hope and dignity that I saw in these people's eyes? It is worth the sacrifice of leaving families, jobs and a safe life. I am proud to be a citizen Soldier in the 116th Brigade Combat Team serving in Iraq. And I'm proud to stand on my watch.'"

Before concluding his speech, President Bush took advantage of one more 116th BCT Soldier's words to bring home his message to Idaho, the nation and the world.

"The men and women of the Idaho Guard are serving freedom's cause with courage and distinction and your courage is changing the world," he said near the end of his remarks. "Spc. Charles Glenn of Boise has been on the front lines in Iraq. He has seen the progress firsthand, and he says, 'I know Idaho has made a big difference here. We have been a part of history.'"

The 116th BCT, headquartered in Boise, Idaho, was mobilized in the summer of 2004 and has been in Iraq since December. The unit's mission includes assisting Iraq's new government, supporting economic development and improving security and stability in the region.

Jungle security

U.S. Army Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, scan the landing zone for possible hostile forces Aug. 26. The Soldiers provided a security cordon so their unit could build a playset for a local school yard in northern Baghdad. The mission was aptly named Operation Jungle Gym.

Photo by U.S. Air Force
Tech. Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV

Coalition Partners

Coalition work with locals to keep Baghdad community safe

Story and photos by Spc. Mary Rose
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

Cpl. Matthew W. Duddles, infantryman, Co. A, 3rd Bn., 297th Infantry Regt., Alaska Army National Guard, talks with Iraqi children while pulling security on the streets of a small town on the outskirts of Baghdad recently.

Infantry Soldiers from the Alaska Army National Guard have a defined mission, which is providing force protection in the Baghdad area, but their mission involves much more than patrols and Baghdad community oversight.

During their days patrolling the streets or waiting to be called for emergency action, they interact with local families, handing out stuffed animals and candy to the hordes of children who chase after their vehicles and to patients at a local hospital.

"Our main mission is force protection … but our guys like working with the local people too," said Capt. Wayne Mitchell, executive officer, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment.

Outer-perimeter patrols take up much of the Soldiers' time. They drive around the outer boundaries of the Baghdad Coalition compounds and through towns, such as Al Furat and Iraqi Family Village. While patrolling, they stop suspicious vehicles and search them for any illegal or out-of-the-ordinary items.

They learn the areas while scanning for roadside improvised explosive devices.

"We detect and deter possible enemies," said Mitchell.

The Alaskan Soldiers also support a quick reaction force on Camp Victory, a team of troops who are always geared up and ready to respond to an emergency outside of the compound.

The unit also observes the progress of the water systems, sewer systems, school projects, electrical projects and community trash clean-up projects.

"Since we got here, there are areas that have had great improvement," said Sgt. 1st Class William Schwenke, A Co., 3rd Bn., 297th Inf. Regt.

Schwenke pointed at an area outside of Camp Victory as his team was on a patrol where the local people were dumping their household trash.

The field he pointed to is now a clean area with vegetation growing in it. Both of these missions have great importance, but the troops enjoy interacting with the people in the local communities too, Mitchell said.

Spc. Ronald Wilson checks the ID of an Iraqi man at a security checkpoint.

"The guys love to help out," said 1st Sgt. Dan Randall, first sergeant, A Co., 3rd Bn., 297th Inf. Regt.

The unit gets donations from families, friends and churches in Alaska that they give to the towns they patrol, Randall said.

The Alaskan troops support a hospital and a home where many impoverished children reside, which they call the orphanage even though it isn't state subsidized. "They feel good when they get to help out," Randall added.

While providing humanitarian assistance to the locals isn't part of their defined mission, it's a mission the 129 Alaskan troops are happy to take on as infantry Soldiers.

According to Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the Alaska Army National Guard has not been mobilized since World War II.

Courtesy photo

The Kirkuk City Religious Affairs Council consists of Sunni, Shi'a, Kurds, and Christian religious leaders who meet and plan how they can influence the progress of peace, stability and cooperation among their people. On Aug. 30, three members of the council, Shaykh Ali Khalid, Shaykh Sayyid Maki and Archbishop Louis Sako (Chaldean), appeared on IMN Television Show, Al Iraqia Network. They encouraged their followers to avoid violence, to report any violent acts, and to support the Constitutional Referendum by getting out and voting.

Bomb maker captured near Hit

By Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Multi-National Forces raided a suspected terrorist location near Hit Aug. 23 capturing Shakir Ahmad Mahmud Khalifah, (aka Abu Sa'ad or Abu 'Ali), who is a known vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) facilitator for the Al-Ahwal Brigade in Hit.

Sa'ad controlled all facets of VBIED employment for the Al-Ahwal Brigade. He procured vehicles and explosives; manufactured the VBIED; then planned, reconnoitered, and executed the VBIED operation. Additionally, he transported and sold weapons and explosives in the Hit area to local terrorists and terrorist groups. A VBIED was found in the process of being built at the raid location.

During the raid, Multi-National Forces found more than 80, 122 mm artillery rounds, 107 mm rockets, 120 mm and 82 mm mortars and numerous fuses and other initiators. Additionally, hundreds of anti-aircraft rounds and 7.62 mm machine gun ammunition were discovered on the premises. All the munitions were destroyed onsite by Coalition Forces.

Abu Khallad

Iraqi Security Forces Operations This Week in Iraq

Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are taking more and more responsibility for the security of their regions as 1,700 students began advanced individual training at Kirkush Military Training Base and 500 troops graduated from various schools throughout the country. This week, ISF rescued an abducted girl in Baghdad and captured two weapons caches and 24 terrorists.

Multi-National Division - North Central

Operations

In the North Central region this week, Iraqi Army (IA) Soldiers discovered a cache in Kirkuk. The Soldiers found 19 120 mm artillery rockets, four Katusha rockets and one mortar tube.

In Balad, IA Soldiers killed one gunman and captured four more while responding to several drive-by shootings.

IA Soldiers also captured 11 more suspected terrorists in a series of raids in Tahrir.

IA Soldiers killed two terrorists and wounded one at a traffic checkpoint in downtown Samarra. A suicide vest and a PKC machine gun were also confiscated.

Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division detained a suspected terrorist and confiscated four large boxes of AK-47 ammunition in Samarra Aug. 30.

Change of Responsibility

The Iraqi Base Support Unit assumed control of all perimeter force protection of a sector in Kirkuk on Aug. 31.

Training

Approximately 450 Soldiers graduated from three Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Courses at the Kirkush Military Training Base Aug. 29. Nearly 1,700 Soldiers started MOS and noncommissioned officer (NCO) training at the school Aug. 31.

Training continues at the Iraqi Army Support and Services Institute at Taji as approximately 50 Soldiers graduated from medic training.

Multi-National Force - North West

Operations

During routine patrols of Mosul, IA Soldiers captured seven suspected terrorists.

In Mosul, Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division, discovered an IED and cordoned the area. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel contained and disposed of the 122 mm round without incident.

Multi-National Force - West

Change of Responsibility

Iraqi Army units continue to take over security responsibility in the western region. They currently provide outer cordon support to some Coalition offensives, while conducting independent security and offensive operations in Rawah and combined zone reconnaissance near the Syrian border. To bolster those numbers, 1,000 recruits will begin the Direct Recruitment Replacement cycle at Al Kasik.

Iraqi police are also taking control of cities' security. Iraqi police are establishing themselves in the Tal Afar market area and surrounding towns, in order to allow most Iraqi Army units in Ninevah to conduct greater independent zone reconnaissance and offensive operations against anti-Iraqi forces (AIF).

A large numbers of locals, particularly minority Sunnis, are volunteering for the Army and police.

Multi-National Division - Baghdad

Operations

In Sadr City, protesters rioted, but the appearance of IA troops quickly reduced the unrest with minimal casualties or violence. Ministry of Interior reaction teams responded by deploying four Public Order Battalions.

The Iraqi Police in Baghdad independently and successfully rescued a 10-year-old girl near the Al Forqan Mosque. The girl had been abducted the night prior. An unknown number of AIF was captured during the mission.

The Medical Clinic in An Numaniyah became operational Sunday with simultaneous medical training courses beginning at Kirkush Military Training Base.

The life of a 116th Brigade Combat Team working dog

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR — A demonstration of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 116th Brigade Combat Team S-3's working dogs, was given here before a group of 17 Soldiers, Aug. 27.

Most days, the life of a Military Working Dog is a routine of watching their trainer shaking hands with people and standing watch over an area, but occasionally, these highly trained K-9s are called upon to do much more.

With the help of a volunteer, Sgt. Randall Pyell of HHC's S-3 section, the dog's handlers Sr. Airman Scott Zorn and Staff Sgt. Danny Spaide, were able to give a lively demonstration of their dogs' two basic capabilities, to detect explosives, and to attack and subdue a suspect.

First up was Zorn's partner, Aldo, who showed how a working dog can become an attack dog, chasing down the fleeing man and locking on to Pyell's padded left arm.

While being searched, the 'suspect' shoved Zorn away, and again, Aldo had Pyell by the arm. Then the suspect ran away, but thought better of it, stopping and surrendering before Aldo could reach him. Right on cue, Aldo blew by him, returned to sit and watch him until his trainer could catch up to search the individual. Lastly, Aldo escorted Pyell back to a certain spot. Every time the volunteer moved in a direction other than where he was supposed to go, the dog began barking and leaping toward the individual, forcing him to correct his course.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jack White

Staff Sgt. Danny Spaide's dog Britt, has his suspect, Sgt. Randall Pyell, under control.

Next, Spaide's partner, Britt, demonstrated his chase-down technique, latching onto the suspect's arm, though Zorn assured the onlookers that the dogs would grab on to anything they had to. The next anonymous volunteer suspect found out what it was like, as Britt caught him by the arm and detained him.

Then came a demonstration where Zorn padded up, then tried escaping to a waiting vehicle, jumped in, and suddenly found Britt through the window and sitting in his lap, arm in a jaw-lock.

Lastly, Zorn ran to a Humvee, attempting to climb too high for Britt to follow. Fearlessly, the animal threw himself onto the vehicle, catching Zorn in a vise-like grip, stubbornly refusing to let go.

"The S-3 is very proud to have all of them as members of our team," said Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Ahlm, of HHC, 116th BCT's S-3.

"The dogs are highly trained professionals," Spaide said. "They've gone through difficult obstacle courses, to learn to overcome all fear of chasing down a suspect."

Britt then demonstrated his keen sense of smell at locating explosives, by finding the small concealed jar of a type of explosive used by insurgents, then alerting his trainer to the location in the wheel well of the vehicle.

Iraqi Soldiers capture wins in first logistics rodeo

By Sgt. Lorie Jewell
Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq Public Affairs

TAJI — The first Taji National Depot Rodeo pitted teams of Iraqi and Coalition Soldiers against each other, competing in logistic skills events such as pallet loading, vehicle maintenance and material inventory. The competition also included a soccer match and a drill and ceremony contest.

Courtesy photo

Participants race to palletize cargo during one event of the depot rodeo.

A panel of four judges declared the Iraqi team victorious in all events but pallet loading, from which they were disqualified. In the event, each team had five members loading and netting boxes onto three pallets. They were allowed to rotate members in and out, as long as the number of loaders did not exceed five. When the Coalition team started to pull ahead, Iraqi Soldiers watching from the sidelines jumped in to help their comrades, forcing judges to disqualify the team.

In the inventory event, two teams of five competed. Although the Coalition team finished its inventory three minutes ahead of the Iraqis, judges awarded the win to the Iraqis after that team produced inventory sheets that had every block filled in, with complete 11 digit stock numbers in legible print. The Coalition team did not pay as much attention to detail, judges said.

Another event tested the vehicle maintenance skills of each team. The objective was to perform preventive maintenance checks and service on three vehicles, fill out a form on each and select the most battle-ready vehicle. Members then hooked up an empty water buffalo, drove it down a road, unhooked it and return to the starting point with a full buffalo. The Iraqis won by one point.

The Iraqis also won the soccer match, 4 to 2, along with the drill and ceremony competition.

Iraqi Police conduct raid in Bayji

By Staff Sgt. Thomas Mills
1st Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

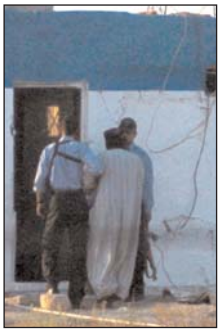
FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, TIKRIT — Iraqi police conducted a massive raid Aug. 21 in Bayji, Iraq, netting 10 detainees.

The operation was planned and executed by the Iraqi police and comprises 500 Iraqi policemen from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Emergency Police Battalions. They raided several houses in Bayji targeting people suspected of criminal activity in the area, said Capt. David Zickafoose, Iraqi Police Services officer in charge, 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), Task Force Liberty.

He added that Soldiers from 1st BCT's Company B, 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, were on hand to help with security and that the mission was entirely an IP operation.

"They chose the targets, they chose the date, they chose the time," Zickafoose said. "The only thing we did was provide an outer cordon."

In the past the EPBs have relied more heavily on Coalition Forces.



Iraqi Police escort a detainee into a holding cell at a Tikrit Iraqi Police station.

In recent missions, however, the IPs have taken much more control over their operations, another Coalition Soldier said.

"They've become more independent," said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Wettstein, 1st BCT, IPS noncommissioned officer in charge. "Before this operation the IPs weren't as efficient in their search methods, but they have improved greatly."

They have improved so much, Zickafoose said, that they are asserting themselves more and more in the process of planning, including planning how Coalition troops are used in the support role.

"They were coming close to telling us how they wanted it done," he said. "That's actually a really good thing."

Zickafoose added that although the IP has been conducting operations independent of Coalition input for some time, this particular operation was different.

"The unique thing about this raid is it's a three battalion operation," Zickafoose said. He said the amount of planning and coordination in a raid like this is quite complicated.

An Iraqi Police officer from the Salah Ad Din Emergency Police Battalion escorts a detainee at a Tikrit Iraqi Police station. The detainee was a suspected criminal caught during a raid Aug. 21 in Bayji.

"That's actually pretty impressive."

The raids aim to "look for criminals," Zickafoose said. Often, he said, the murderers and kidnappers also turn out to be insurgents.

The policemen gathered information on their targets using undercover officers like police in the United States, he said.

"Everything they have back in the States they have here," he added.

Aside from having an infantry company to support them, the IPs also coordinated with 1st BCT for aerial support from U.S. Army attack helicopters and Air Force fighter jets.

Iraqi civilian tips lead to weapons cache

Sgt. Kevin Bromley
3/1 Armored Division
Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Tips from Iraqi citizens led to the discovery by U.S. Soldiers of a weapons cache Aug. 23.

Soldiers of Company D, 172nd Infantry Regiment, Task Force 1/118th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade heard small-arms fire near their position while conducting security operations north of Baghdad.

The Soldiers moved toward the sound of the gunfire but found a deserted fighting position that contained two mortar rounds, 12 mortar fuses, and a 155 mm artillery shell.

While the Soldiers searched the area, Iraqi civilians approached and said they knew where to find more weapons. The men of D Co. found two, 203 mm rockets and two additional mortar rounds, based on the information provided by the Iraqi citizens.

Iraqi Security Forces and Task Force Baghdad officials continue to encourage all Iraqi citizens to report suspicious behavior by e-mailing: *baghdadtipshotline @yahoo.com* or calling one of the TIPS hotlines at 07901737723 or 07901737727.

Georgia Soldiers detain terrorists, find weapons cache while on patrol

CAMP STRIKER, BAGHDAD — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers detained five suspected terrorists during a patrol Aug. 27. The U.S. Soldiers were assisted by local residents who pointed out an unfamiliar white four-door car which they said did not belong in the area.

Soldiers from Company C, 295th Infantry Battalion, 48th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 3rd Infantry Division, cordoned off the area and searched the vehicle.

Inside the car, they discovered a weapons cache which included a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, two RPG rounds, four AK-47 rifles, a machine gun, six body armor vests, 23 hand grenades and other significant evidence.

"This find was strictly due to the cooperation of the local citizens and our Soldiers taking action," said Maj. Liston Edge, a 48th BCT operations officer from Kennesaw, Ga. "It is important to take immediate action when something doesn't seem right."

Iraqi police recruits graduate from Jordan training center

Story and photos by Ann Bertucci
Civilian Police Assistance Training Team Public Affairs

JORDAN — In the desert near Amman is a newly-built police academy where 1,574 Iraqi police recruits marched to the sound of blaring bagpipes as they graduated from an eight-week basic training course Aug. 27.

The facility, the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC), has produced 21,700 graduates since opening its doors in November 2003.

The concept to train Iraqi police in Jordan developed from a need to train and deploy large numbers of Iraqi police personnel. To meet the requirement for new police officers, as well as to continue to provide training for existing officers, a coordinated training program with multiple training locations was developed. This aggressive training effort included a large-scale training operation in Jordan, designed to train about 16,000 new recruits a year.

More than 1,000 Iraqi police recruits celebrate their graduation from the Jordan International Police Training Center.

The first group of students consisted mainly of police recruits who had been enrolled at Baghdad's three-year police college when the war broke out. The students were sent home, but called back to join the new Iraqi Police after the hostilities ended. Those who returned quickly found themselves in Jordan being trained by a cadre of 12 Iraqi and 60 international police instructors. Because of their previous training, many of these first students were promoted to lieutenant following graduation.

Today JIPTC has a student capacity of 3,500, with an instructor pool of nearly 300 trainers from 17 different countries to include Iraq, Jordan, Canada, Sweden, Czech Republic, Finland, Singapore, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Slovakia, Belgium, Australia, Estonia, Croatia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Iraqi police recruits march in formation at their recent graduation from the Jordan International Police Training Center.

New classroom and accommodation buildings – some as long as football fields – have gone up and students now sleep dormitory style, with 80 per room. There is also a new dining facility that seats 1,500, where employees prepare and serve more than 12,000 meals per day.

Iraqi Police graduate first combat medic skills course

Story and photos by Ann Bertucci
Civilian Police Assistance Training Team Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Police are first responders and under fire, and now they are fighting back to save lives, with a new Combat Medic Course.

The first class of 40 officers to complete the five-week course graduated Sept. 1.

The course focuses on life-saving techniques including managing air waves, controlling bleeding and treating shock.

Reports have shown the leading cause of death for Iraqi police following an attack is bleeding and or shock. It is estimated that up to 50 percent could be saved with immediate medical intervention.

The students are a mix of police officers, special police commandos, traffic police, and border enforcement officers who come from areas including Baghdad, Tikrit, Fallujah and Mosul. The course is taught by U.S. Army Maj. Carmen Mercer, with assistance from Iraqi medics.

Combat medics will wear the Red Crescent on their police uniforms.

Students practice giving injections during the training course.

The program of instruction is based on the U.S. Army medic course. Mercer believes that training the police as medics will bring a drastic reduction in deaths.

The course will now transition to a "train-the-trainers" phase that will allow the program to expand more quickly and reach a goal of having at least two trained medics in every police station and special police unit.

One special police commando, who has survived attacks on several recent police operations, appreciates the course and its instructors.

"This training will make a big difference," he said. "I believe I will be able to save lives with the knowledge I have gained."

The Iraqi Police who graduate the course will wear a Red Crescent on their uniforms.

Transactions on Iraq's Stock Exchange continued to rise, topping eight billion Iraqi Dinars this week.

Media coverage wrongly highlighted detention of journalists in Iraq as unauthorized, unlawful

Recent media coverage has wrongly highlighted the detention of journalists working in Iraq as unauthorized and unlawful.

This coverage fails to acknowledge United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 gives Coalition Forces the right, for imperative reasons of security, to hold individuals as security detainees who pose a threat to the security and stability of Iraq. Coalition Forces do not make exceptions based on the occupations of individuals engaged in highly suspicious activities or situations. The security environment demands all threats be taken very seriously.

There are no exceptions allowing anyone to claim immunity based on their occupation. Coalition Forces follow strict rules of engagement during combat and all threats are equally evaluated and engaged appropriately.

The threat to innocent life in Iraq comes from the systematic violation of all the rules and customs of war by the enemies of the Iraqi people. These terrorists, former regime elements and others strive to create chaotic situations where it is difficult to separate the innocent from the guilty. They operate by blending into the crowd.

The essence of the law of war and the Geneva Conventions is the distinction between combatants and non-combatants. The enemies of Iraq deliberately create a situation where Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition troops cannot distinguish between innocent civilians and deadly foe. All their operations aim directly at undermining this difference.

Journalists are among those non-combatants directly endangered by the terrorists' disregard for innocent life. This deliberate and gross violation of the laws and customs of war creates a threat for all civilians, including journalists.

There have been very few incidents in which journalists have been detained by Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces. Most of these journalists have been released by the capturing unit or after initial questioning at the Brigade Internment Facility.

As part of the detention process, all detainee detentions are reviewed by a Detention Review Authority (DRA) at the Brigade Internment Facilities and the Division Internment Facilities. The detainees' files are reviewed by a Magistrates Cell within the first 72-hours after arriving at the Theater Internment Facility. The Magistrate Cell determines whether there is enough evidence to continue internment and whether the detainee should go before the Central Criminal Court of Iraq or the Combined Review and Release Board. The Magistrate Cell will provide the detainee with a "Reason for Detention and Appeal Form" which explains the reason for internment to the detainee.

All security detainees, including journalists, are treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and with dignity and respect under the care and custody of the Multi-National Forces – Iraq.

All security detainees are in-processed into the TIFs through the In-processing Holding Area at Abu Ghraib. No detainees are eligible for visitation during their first 60 days of internment, which is standing operating procedure for all detainees in the TIFs. Upon completion of their first 60 days, detainees are authorized four visitations per month, or one per week. Only immediate family members or the detainee's lawyer are authorized to visit.

Under UNSCR 1546, Coalition Forces are not required to provide security detainees with an attorney. However, all security detainees have the right to hire their own attorney and meet with that attorney during scheduled visitations.

If a detainee is charged with violating an Iraqi law by an Iraqi Investigative Judge, at that time an attorney is then provided to the detainee. The detainee still has the right to hire an attorney if he so wishes.

As part of their due process, all security detainees will either go before the CRRB or the CCCI.

The CRRB is a procedure that has been established to determine which detainees are eligible for release under UNSCR 1546. The CRRB reviews the cases of each security detainee within the first 90 days of their detention and every 180 days after that.

The board consists of nine members: six representatives from the Iraqi government — two representatives each from the Ministries of Justice, Interior, and Human Rights — and three senior Multi-National Forces officers.

The CCCI consists of a panel of three Iraqi judges and has become the primary court for trying terrorists and insurgents captured by Coalition Forces or Iraqi Security Forces.

All security detainees, including journalists, are treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and with dignity and respect under the care and custody of the Multi-National Forces – Iraq.

224 students began classes Saturday at the Iraqi Military Academy in Ar Rustamiyah. This is the third class of students in a year-long course designed to create the next generation of junior officers in the Iraqi Army.

Taken off the streets of Iraq

Corrective actions ...

Courtesy photo

An Iraqi Soldier receives some respectable corrective training from an Iraqi major for talking during a mission brief outside of Forward Operating Base Paliwoda.

This week in Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Coalition Operations: Across Iraq

Summary of Iraqi Security Forces in action

Iraqi Security Forces continue to take control of their nation's security. Sixty-six terrorists were arrested, two vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) were discovered before they were detonated, 20 people were arrested for local lawlessness and Ba'qubah enjoyed its second day free of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) this week.

Additionally, two Iraqi Security Forces units have taken full responsibility for security in sections of Baghdad and Rahwah.

Experienced Iraqi Soldiers continue to recruit and train Iraqi citizens to bolster the force's ranks.

MND-NC

Operations

One terrorist was killed and another wounded when the IED they were working on in Kirkuk prematurely detonated. Security forces searched the house, uncovering three completed shaped-charge IEDs.

A terrorist was killed when an IED he was removing from his vehicle detonated in Samarra Aug. 29. Task Force Liberty Soldiers detained four other individuals, who were removing the body from the vehicle and placing it in their truck.

In another operation in the north central region of Iraq, five suspected terrorists were captured in Balad during a combined forces operation that included Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division and Task Force 5-7. In Hawijah, a known terrorist-cell leader was also captured.

A combined operations raid in Samarra also uncovered two small caches and captured two IED triggermen.

Security operations in Tahrir, Duluiyah, Zagilbana, Balad, Dujayl, and Tarmiyah captured 32 known terrorists, including five wanted for murder in Abayachi.

Construction

Samarra police will have a new station this winter. Construction began this week on a $4.3 million police station project, which is scheduled to open in December. Approximately 30 Iraqi employees are working on the station that will house 250 police officers. Sixty construction projects are planned for the city. Eighteen are in progress and 34 are complete.

The Diyala Bridge north of Baqubah was repaired and reopened after an IED attack that damaged it.

In Tal Banat, water reconstruction efforts are a primary focus of the new Iraqi government. The village is the latest recipient of water reconstruction efforts. Workers repaired two wells and dug another one next to the local clinic and several schools. The three wells supply more than 60 percent of the village's water supply.

Political talks/voting/ demonstrations

Several hundred people demonstrated peacefully in Qasaniyah (east of Balad Ruz) to protest Wednesday's terror attacks in Baghdad and express support for the ISF.

MNF-NW

Operations

In Mulhallabiyah (midway between Mosul and Tal Afar), security forces discovered a large series of caches containing a functional anti-aircraft machine gun, several mortars and an SA-7 surface to air missile, IED materials and more than 100 artillery rounds. Nine suspected anti-Iraqi forces connected with the caches were also captured.

In Tal Afar, Coalition Forces captured seven suspected insurgent gunmen and operations in and around Mosul captured four, including two suspected cell leaders and a suspected VBIED facilitator.

Task Force Freedom Soldiers also apprehended 11 terrorists, a cache of improvised explosive device building material and a cache of mortars, AK-47s and rocket propelled grenades during several operations throughout Mosul Aug. 28.

Construction

Construction on the Mosul Airport Tower is 14 percent completed. The $10.3 million upgrade to the Mosul Airport will add a nine-story concrete control tower and install lighting and navigational aids. Construction, which is expected to be complete in late December, will allow the Mosul Airport to operate in all weather conditions.

There are 158 projects planned in Mosul. Of those, 49 are complete, and 58 are in progress.

MND-NE

Construction

A third of the construction on a $29,000 girl's high school project in Al Saniyah is complete. The construction is scheduled to be complete by mid-September. Two 35-square-meter classrooms and expanded restroom facilities will be added to the school, which currently holds 600 students.

This is one of 17 school renovations planned within Qadisiyah Province. Of the 17 schools, three are complete and 14 are under construction.

MNF-W

Operations

Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Iraqi Intervention Force and elements of 3/25 U.S. Marines conducting a dismounted patrol in Hit responded to the scene of an IED detonation Aug. 26. The troops searched the immediate area of the explosion and found two injured insurgents suspected of being the triggermen. The suspects were in possession of three AK-47 automatic rifles, one Seno base station, and one 12-volt battery. Both suspects tested positive for gun powder residue.

Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Iraqi Intervention Force and elements of 3/25 U.S. Marines found an IED in alley near a roadway in Hit. The IED was hidden

See ***OPERATIONS,*** next page

Say laaaaaa aaah

Capt. Jeremy Orr, 198th Armor, 155th Brigade Combat Team, examines an Iraqi girl during a Medical Assistance Program clinic in Najaf Aug. 28.

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross

Operations

*from **previous page***

in a white bag and consisted of a 155 mm projectile, a base station, and a motorcycle battery. Wires were visible extending from the bag. Soldiers secured the area until an explosive ordnance disposal team arrived to destroy the device.

Soldiers with the 1st Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and elements of Task Force 2-69 conducted a targeted raid Aug. 26 against an anti-Iraq force assassination cell suspected of planning attacks on government officials in Khalis. Soldiers detained 11 suspected insurgents and transported them to a secure facility for questioning.

Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Iraqi Intervention Force and 3/25 U.S. Marines detained the six suspected insurgents and confiscated one, 82 mm projectile, one set of night vision goggles, and various examples of anti-Coalition propaganda while searching a building in Hit Aug. 30.

In Husayba, air strikes on the train station killed an estimated 21 insurgents after Coalition Forces positively identified anti-Iraq forces in the building.

In Khalidiyah, security forces captured a terrorist while he placed an IED. Security forces recovered the IED and found a large assortment of IED-manufacturing parts.

A combined cordon-and-search in Saqlawiyah captured five suspected terrorists believed responsible for coordinating suicide VBIED attacks, IED attacks, kidnappings, car-jackings, and distributing anti-Iraqi forces propaganda.

A terrorist was detained during an operation in Hit. One million Dinars and various weapons were also confiscated.

Combined forces captured eight targeted terrorists in Rutbah, Hit, and Mussayib.

Eleven other terrorists, including two targeted individuals believed responsible for IED, indirect, and mortar attacks were captured during combined operations in Fallujah and Karma, including one in Fallujah who was suspected of close ties with a know VBIED maker.

Coalition Forces discovered a series of weapons caches in Ramadi containing various ordnance and IED-making materials.

Political talks/voting/ demonstrations

In Anbar province, Coalition commanders met this week with the IA commander to discuss integration of Iraqi Forces and future operations. Citizens living in the eastern portions of the province have openly expressed satisfaction with Coalition Forces and voiced their resolve to participate in shaping the country's future by voting.

Despite sectarian strife and AIF threats, all respondents of a recent atmospherics poll in the Tal Afar area said they will vote in the October referendum and believe the security situation will soon improve.

Construction

Construction on a $5 million Women's and Children's Hospital project in Ar Ramadi is more than half completed. Construction is expected to be complete by late May 2006. Twenty-five Iraqi workers are repairing doctors' homes, elevators and the sewage system. A new, reverse osmosis water treatment system and an incinerator will also be installed. This is one of two ongoing medical projects in Ar Ramadi.

Construction on the Al Zwegyr water pumping unit in Al Zwegyr, Al Anbar Province was completed today. This project filters aluminum and chlorine from water to provide drinking water to 30,000 people.

MND-B Operations

Coalition Forces captured 43 insurgents in various operations around the city, including one woman involved in a rocket attack. Forces also discovered and confiscated two small weapons caches. Security forces in the eastern outskirts of Baghdad uncovered a cache including several modified passports along with laptop, cell phone and anti-Iraq forces propaganda.

Construction

Construction of a $699,000 primary healthcare center project south of Sadr City is 20 percent complete. Construction started in October 2004 and is expected to be complete in November.

Seventeen Iraqi workers are preparing this building for use as a medical and dental center complete with testing laboratory, x-ray laboratory, pharmacy, vaccination center and public education center.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division

Sadr City crews expand local medical facilities

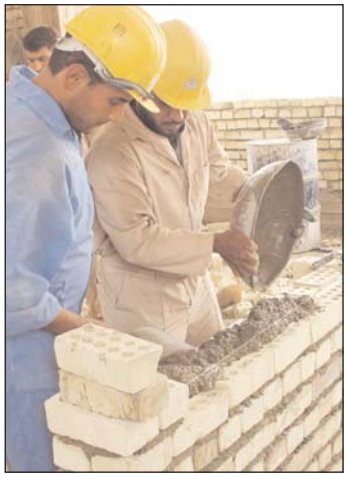
Story and photo by Norris Jones
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Central District

BAGHDAD — More has been invested for health care in Sadr City this past year than over 15 years under Saddam Hussein.

In fact, it was 1986 when Iraq's last new hospital was built.

For Sadr City, the Al Baladi Maternity and Children's Hospital opened in 1983. Last July, workers began renovating and upgrading that facility under a $17.2 million contract. In addition, six new primary healthcare centers are under construction at a cost of $3.7 million.

Al Baladi hospital was originally designed as a two-story facility with 260 beds. It has been expanded to accommodate 100 more beds and serves an average of 500 to 700 maternity, pediatric and blood disorder patients daily.



Local Iraqis are helping build the Al Tamoz Primary Healthcare Center. Six new primary healthcare centers in Sadr City are scheduled to open later this year.

"Prior to the hospital refurbishment getting underway, patients there had to tolerate 100-degree temperatures because of non-functioning air handling systems. The newborns (about 30 babies are born there daily) and the elderly are two groups who have little tolerance for such extreme heat," said Robert Helmerick, Sadr City medical facilities project engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Central District. "Today those interior temperatures are at 75 degrees and the infant mortality rate at the hospital is declining."

Among the major items the contractor has already completed is rehabilitating the hospital's four elevators, putting on an entire new roof, building a new incinerator for the biohazard waste, and installing a reverse osmosis purification plant capable of producing 6,400 gallons of clean water daily, Helmerick said. "All repair work is coordinated with the Iraq Ministry of Health, the hospital administration, and the contractor."

About 130 Iraqis are on the construction crew. Work there is 40 percent complete and the contractor has a goal of scheduling the commissioning of all refurbishments in February.

The six primary healthcare centers in Sadr City, which are 20 to 40 percent finished, are designed to help ease Al Baladi's huge outpatient load and should be ready in late fall. Each of those facilities, with an average price tag of $600,000, is a two-story structure which will offer 1,155 square meters of space for medical or dental examinations including X-ray capabilities, testing laboratory, pharmacy, vaccination and public education.

"This capability will dramatically improve the healthcare available to Sadr City's 2.5 million residents," said Capt. Jack Mooney, assistant brigade engineer with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Along with new medical facilities, other infrastructure improvements are also underway in Sadr City ...

• $106 million to install new electrical poles, power lines, and transformers in 76 sectors (impacting 1.2 million residents there).

• nearly $60 million on a sewer repair project involving about 39 kilometers (24 miles) of Sadr City sewers.

• $2.3 million for 27 new compact water treatment units, each producing 15,000 liters of clean potable water daily. Ten of these units will use water from wells, 17 from the Sadr City raw water system. The Compact Water Unit at Thawrat Al-Hijara School is the first to be fully operational and clean water from there is being supplied to Sadr City residents. Currently 60 people are employed working on this project.

• $600,000 to renovate three police stations. That work, which has been completed, includes force protection measures of additional security walls, new guard towers, and new gates.

• $902,000 for a new Sadr City Fire Station which will open next spring. The three-story, 925-square-meter structure will feature five bays (three for ladder trucks, two for SUVs). It will include a dormitory area for 20 fire fighters, dining room for 30, commercial grade kitchenette to feed 40 people, a training room for 20, locker room, a control room and a Chief's office.

• $279,125 for a trash transfer station with expected completion by the end of December.

• $3.7 million for 28 Sadr City schools (an average of $133,250 each) to upgrade their electricity, lights, heat, water, doors and windows, blackboards, functioning bathrooms and furniture for both students and faculty.

The projects referenced above account for nearly $190 million of infrastructure improvements for Sadr City.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division

Corps civilian leads, manages reconstruction projects

Story and photo
by LuAnne Fantasia
Gulf Region Central District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD — Karen Durham-Aguilera's story is an all-American one. She is the child of immigrants who stressed the importance of education. As a little girl, she focused on perseverance, earning her bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and her master's in Civil Geotechnical Engineering.

Today, as a Senior Executive Service member of the U.S. Government Civil Service, she leads a team that manages the approximately $12 billion Iraq Reconstruction and Relief Program, or IRRF as the Director of Programs for the Project and Contracting Office.

"This challenge is an exciting opportunity. Rarely is a civilian given the chance to lead in contingency operations," Durham-Aguilera said.

"Along with the State Department team and the Multi-National Forces - Iraq, the PCO and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have the opportunity here to make a significant difference for the people of Iraq and I'm delighted to be a part of that effort."

Karen Durham-Aguilera, director of Programs for the PCO, she works with the Iraqi people in the Iraq Reconstruction and Relief Program.

She feels a tremendous social impact is being affected throughout Iraq by the Coalition of military, civilian and contractor professionals helping the Iraqis recover a country, with all the inherent difficulties related to such a process, and hampered by the effects of terrorist insurgents.

"Being here is part of global history. We hope the positive impact of our work will be felt and remembered well beyond this part of the world," she said.

"Under Saddam Hussein's regime, the infrastructure was neglected, with the only areas receiving attention being those that specifically impacted him, his family, or inner circle. We were astounded at the extent of neglect ongoing for over 30 years," she said.

During a recent tour of a sewage treatment facility where she spoke with workers who were there during the former regime, she said they openly admitted to her that, due to a lack of funding, they were unable to keep the facility in proper working order.

"For nearly 30 years, Iraq lived and suffered under Saddam's repression," she said. "As a result, many Iraqis only know this way of life. So, a major focus for the Coalition is to earn their trust, gain their belief that we're trying to help them, and teach and coach modern technology."

"It will take years to accomplish all that needs to be done and this is in the midst of writing a constitution, forming a stable government, and trying to establish a sustainable security for the Iraqi people," she added.

Building a history book for the Iraqi people

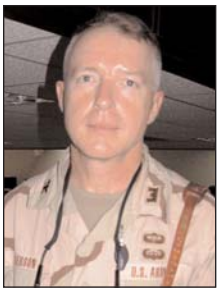
By LuAnne Fantasia
Gulf Region Central District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD — Understanding the facts, figures, and players in the Iraq Reconstruction and Relief Program is a daunting task. But that's the goal Army engineer Col. Bjarne Iverson plans to reach by the end of this month.

As director of the National Reconstruction Operations Center here, Iverson leads the team taking the NROC through a transition from its current tactical-level focus to a strategic one.

"In the end state, the NROC will be the repository of the total U.S. government reconstruction effort in Iraq, as well as an authoritative source of reconstruction status. Currently, in order to obtain this data analysts must review several reporting formats," Iverson said.

"Reports from all of the U.S. government agencies in Iraq will be fed into the center, where we can generate one comprehensive report. At the same time we will be able to tailor reports by sector, city, or command as required."



Iverson

Ultimately, these reports will give leaders the most accurate information to base their decisions and recommendations on," he added.

"Eventually we'll produce a tool that we'll turn over to the Iraqi government, as a sort of history book and management tool, for their own future planning," Iverson said.

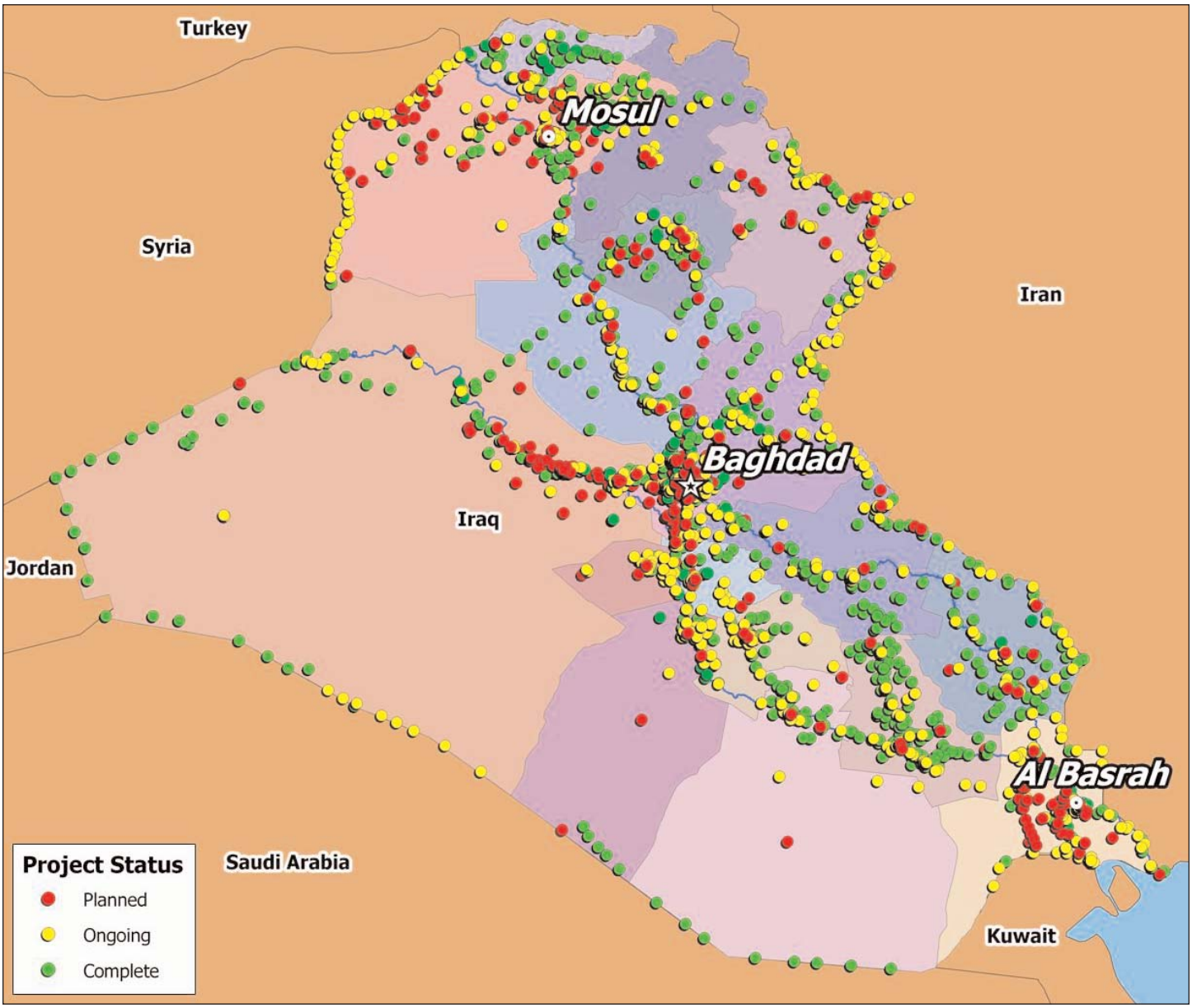
The Reconstruction and Relief Program includes: Security and Justice; Public Works and Water; Oil; Buildings, Health and Education; Transportation and Communication; and Electricity.

"The National Reconstruction Operation Center will provide our leaders with the total scope of U.S. government reconstruction efforts," Iverson said, adding that ideally NROC reports and field operations will help to synchronize current and future efforts, with less redundancies and repetitive assessments.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division

Iraqi Reconstruction Projects:

Where we've been and where we're going



Five border forts were completed this week in the Eastern Diyala Province. Three forts are located in the Balad Rooz District and two in the Khanaqin district. Twenty-six border fort projects have started and 15 forts are completed. Completion of these forts reinforces security along the Iraq-Iran border.

This week in Multi-National Division - Central South

Sharing experiences

By Polish Navy LCD Bartosz Zajda

Staff is the brain of every military unit. Staff officers are expected to be multi-skilled and involved in designing and planning of many military activities. Their role is also to help the commander make and implement decisions.

Every day Iraqi staff officers from 8th Division Iraqi Army develop their skills during training and exercises.

Iraqi Soldiers have made tremendous progress in training, said Col. Andrzej Bujak, Chief of the Polish Military Transition Team on division level, MNDCS. He said well trained staff officers create the conditions for success of the troops in the field.

An Iraqi staff officer plots locations on a map.

Staff officers are responsible for personnel management, reconnaissance, planning, logistics, communications, training and other branches of military activities. It's a core element of one organism we call chain of command system BUJAK said.

Polish and Iraqi staff officers dicuss ongoing and future military operations.
Courtesy photos

The 8th Iraqi Army (IA) Division's staff officers take part in training and operations every day. Recently one of the most interesting exercises was operation planning. Iraqi officers from G-3 branch 8th Division had to analyze the exercise situation and make a decision. The result of their exercise was their plan how to effectively use forces in a crisis situation.

Operation planning is a sophisticated process. Staff planners have to analyze all the things, even small details before he will send the troops to fight, said Lt. Col. Dariusz Majchrzak, an instructor from Polish Military Transition Teams. That's why it's a key element in the staff training system.

Polish Military Contingent, V rotation (started on July 26) provided four Military Transition Teams to assist the 8th IA Division in staff training process. Polish instructors work together with Iraqi staff officers at the battalion, brigade and division level. It is a priority MNDCS mission in Iraq. Over the last 10 years there have been a lot of changes in the Polish Army.

Polish troops provide layettes for Iraqi children

This week Multi-National Division - Central South's (MND-CS) Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC) provided 70 layettes for Iraqi children from Pediatric and Maternity Hospital in Ad Diwaniyah this week.

The children received toys, clothes, shoes and personal hygiene supplies. Just several days before MND-CS HACC also provided wheelchairs and clothes to the Disabled Children's Care Organization from Ad Diwaniyah.

"Every kind of assistance we provide is important, because there are still a lot of needs we have to satisfy," said Polish Army Lt. Col. Joanna Dziura, chief of MNDCS Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center.

"Our mission is to help Iraqi people, to support Iraqi humanitarian organizations, to do everything to make their life better," she said.

Every week MNDCS Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center plan and organize humanitarian assistance actions. One of the most important thing in the HACC's activities is effectively using the time to satisfy the needs of the local population.

"Before Iraq's new school year begins, one of the greatest needs is school supplies. Through our office we will be able to coordinate several donations from different agencies and will continue doing so counting with the support of other humanitarian centers," said Dziura. "Friendliness we see everywhere is the best price for our service in Iraq," she said.

The goal of humanitarian assistance is to help Iraqi society in everyday activities, including medical, educational, cultural heritage and food assistance. The mission of the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center is to facilitate stabilization and recovery by coordinating Humanitarian Assistance across the MND-CS area of operations.

Courtesy Photo

A Polish Army Soldier donates toys and clothes to a Pediatric and Maternity Hospital in Ad Diwaniyah.

This week in Multi-National Division - Baghdad

West Point professors, cadets donate textbooks for Iraqi women's college

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Ken Walker
Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Brian Rauschuber, Task Force Baghdad Civil Affairs, listens as Assistant Professor Shatha Alsaadi, Head of the English Department at the Women's College of Education; and Shakir Hammoudi, Dean of the Women's College at the University of Baghdad express their appreciation of textbooks donated by West Point cadets and professors.

BAGHDAD — Iraqi students will be hitting the books this fall thanks to West Point cadets.

Hundreds of boxes containing thousands of textbooks donated by cadets at the United States Military Academy were delivered to the University of Baghdad's Women's College recently in a humanitarian aid effort between cadets and professors at West Point and the U.S. Army and Air Force.

What began as merely a "what if" idea became a coordinated logistical mission between the military academy, Charleston Air Force Base, Sather Air Base (Baghdad International Airport (BIAP)) and the University of Baghdad.

Professor Tom Lainis, associate dean of plans and Resources at West Point, coordinated the collection effort at the academy.

Cadets who normally sell their textbooks back to campus bookstores donated them to a humanitarian relief program to help the students at the University of Baghdad.

The Denton program is a Department of Defense logistics program that transports State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development-approved, privately-donated humanitarian cargo worldwide by land, sea and air on a space-available basis within the Defense Transportation System.

Historically, the most common cargo has been medical and dental supplies, school supplies, furniture, vehicles, agricultural supplies, clothing, machinery and vocational training equipment. These items are used to support on-going relief and development projects in underdeveloped regions of the world.

"The (Denton) humanitarian relief program is a great opportunity to provide relief and to assist in the reconstruction for the locals here in Baghdad," said Staff Sgt. Jason Stonehocker, 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, Aerial Port Flight, Cargo. Stonehocker works at BIAP and hails from Sumter, S.C. "It is a privilege to assist in getting the supplies and materials to the local communities."

The textbook delivery isn't the first humanitarian relief that Baghdad has received, and it certainly won't be the last. The 3rd Infantry Division is providing support to the mission by picking up supplies and materials.

"We greatly appreciate the initiative that the 3ID has had," Stonehocker said.

"The 3ID makes sure that the cargo gets in the right hands."

Ken Hundemer, with the Denton program, coordinated the operational aspects at Charleston AFB. As the project gained momentum, he contacted Sgt. 1st Class Brian Rauschuber, of Task Force Baghdad Civil Affairs and told him the books were being collected, palletized, and shipped to BIAP.

The military contacted Dr. Saadi Shakir Hammoudi, Dean of the Women's College at the University of Baghdad; and Assistant Professor Shatha Alsaadi, Head of the Department of English at the Women's College of Education to arrange delivery.

When the Task Force Baghdad trucks arrived, Shakir and Shatha were on hand to greet and thank the Soldiers for their efforts to make the delivery possible.

"We are grateful," said Shatha. "We thank them (Soldiers, cadets and professors) for thinking of us, but to give us books because they're thinking of us is great. It's just wonderful!"

The donated books came from all subject areas, including English, chemistry, physics, economics, sociology, and psychology.

"Our books need to be updated," said Shakir. "For students and professors who care about us ... this means a lot. This will help so many departments. Our students need books on education and teaching, literature, English language, and linguistics."

Iraq's Constitutional Committee received an economic boost this week as the European Community committed 20 million Euros to support Iraq's Constitutional process.

This week in Multi-National Division - North Central

Liberty Soldier builds playground equipment for Kirkuk orphanage

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

Photos courtesy Task Force 2/116 Armor

Children romp and play on new spring toys.

Soldiers from TF 2/116 Armor's Headquarters Co. watch Iraqi children dangle from their new monkey bars Aug. 19 at an orphanage in Kirkuk. Sgt. Fenton Doyle constructed the set from scrap metal and other Soldiers painted the equipment.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKIK — Children at one Kirkuk orphanage now have a playground full of new equipment, thanks to the efforts of the headquarters company of the 116th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force 2nd Battalion, 116th Armor who installed a custom-built playground set on Aug. 19.

While doing an assessment of a Kirkuk orphanage back in March, the Task Force Liberty Soldiers noticed run-down playground equipment that was inadequate for the number of children. One metalworker in the group, Sgt. Fenton Doyle decided to use his talent to build new equipment.

"Sgt. Doyle spent his spare time gathering and welding scrap metal constructing several toys for the children of the orphanage," said Capt. Corey Dahlquist, the Task Force 2/116 personnel officer.

Doyle used old rims and half-shafts from Humvees to build two spring toys. He next built a slide to replace the broken one at the orphanage and a 6-foot swing and swing set using old mud flaps for seats. He also built a set of monkey bars using scrap steel and half-shafts.

"The Soldiers of Headquarters Company painted all of these items and assisted in the delivery and installation of the toys," said Dahlquist. "The local children in the neighborhood all wanted a chance to try out the new equipment while the Soldiers were there installing it. Many of them couldn't wait for it to be installed but just jumped right on."

Helping assess and meet the needs of the community is part of the 116th BCT's mission while deployed in North Central Iraq.

Iraqi Army, community members plan Soldier literacy classes

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, KIRKUK — Iraqi Army (IA) Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division may soon be enjoying the opportunity to learn reading and writing skills as part of a joint initiative between their unit and the local education committee in As Sulaymaniyah.

The initiative was discussed at an Aug. 17 meeting between Soldiers of the 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade's 3rd Battalion and education committee members.

The group plans to conduct the classes at the IA's Fermundi training site in Sulaymaniyah Province.

"Due to the previous regime's lack of focus on education, many Soldiers are illiterate," said Capt. Matthew Godfrey, an operations officer with the 116th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force 1/148 Field Artillery who reported the meeting. "Continuous learning is how an army grows and develops itself. The 3rd IA Brigade is looking for ways to educate their Soldiers."

Photo courtesy Task Force 1-148 Field Artillery

Iraqi Army officials from 3rd Bn., 3rd IA Brigade meet with education committee members from As Sulayminayah Province to discuss literacy training.

TF 1-148 Field Artillery is currently helping to train the IA's 3rd Brigade in the Iraqi province of As Sulaymaniyah. The IA's 3rd Brigade assumed responsibility for the province's security operations from Task Force Liberty in June, one of the first units in Iraq to assume regional control for security operations.

"This program is a good way for the community to give back to the Soldiers who protect them," Godfrey said.

The IA battalion officers and the educators hope to have a program set up and in place this month.

This week in Multi-National Force - West

Marine sees hope for Iraqi children

Story and photo by
Sgt. Stephen D'Alessio
2nd Marine Division

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR RAMADI — When patrolling the streets of Ramadi, to say it's serious business is an understatement. But that doesn't mean one wouldn't catch Cpl. William Bryan Malin smiling every now and then.

Malin, a Squad Automatic Weapon machine gunner with the camp's guard force revels in his ability to do something positive for the children here.

For the past six months he and his squad have been patrolling through the farm lands and villages outside the camp. The children know who he is, because they usually get a little stuffed animal or toy when he passes through their field.

Malin is normally a clarinetist on an E-flat clarinet for the 2nd Marine Division Band. For the duration of his deployment here, he's been part of the camp's ready-react force, protecting the inhabitants of the camp and surrounding area.

Cpl. William Bryan Malin hands a stuffed animal to an Iraqi child while on patrol.

"I was accepted to the New England Culinary Institute in Montpelier, Vermont before I joined, but after some thinking, I chose the military," he said. "I grew up in a traditional military family because my step dad was in the Air Force. I said a lot of 'yes sir and yes ma'am' growing up. I guess I wanted to continue the legacy.

About a year ago, Malin and his band mates began training in stability and security operations, a training package specifically designed around how combat is conducted in Iraq. Malin received advanced infantry training and learned shooting techniques normally reserved for Marines in combat military occupational specialties.

"We stand in the towers and conduct patrols to keep the peace so people can sleep easy at night," said Malin. "We don't get a lot of praise out here doing this job, but I love it and we're just doing what we're trained to do. And there's something new to learn every time we go out."

He feels that he's made a difference in the lives of the Iraqis in the area surrounding the base and he's protected the lives of the people on it.

Combat Engineers find, destroy enemy weapons

Story and photo by
Cpl. Tom Sloan
2nd Marine Division

AR RAMADI — Marines with 4th Platoon, Company A, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, supporting 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, uncovered several large weapons caches buried in fields on the southern outskirts of the Al Anbar capital here during an anti-insurgent operation Aug. 15.

According to the Marines' tally, they discovered a mortar tube, more than 200 artillery shells in sizes ranging from 60 mm to 155 mm, four .50 caliber machine gun barrels plus more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition and approximately 1,000 7.62 mm rounds, 600 of which were armor piercing.

"We saved Marines' lives today because we found enemy rounds and explosives," said platoon commander 1st Lt. Douglas R. Orr. "The explosives would likely have been used by insurgents to make IEDs (improvised explosive devices)."

The Marines made the discovery while supporting 1st Bn., 5th Marines in Operation Bullard II, which was carried out in and around a small community on the edge of Ramadi.

A combat engineer with 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, stands by with his metal detector in hand while his partner digs for weapons buried in a field recently.

The infantry battalion conducted the operation "to rid the city of insurgents and weapons," Orr said. "The mission was a chance for the battalion to get into an area that's known to have a lot of insurgent activity."

The undertaking kicked off at 4 a.m. and involved multiple elements of the infantry battalion. They searched scores of houses, vehicles and personnel. Orr's platoon was tasked with sweeping several acres of nearby farmland for enemy weapons.

Armed with shovels, metal detectors the Marines worked in teams of two and combed the search area. After two hours of trudging through the loose soil, the Marines started uncovering caches.

Lance Cpl. Brandon C. Jordan, a combat engineer, is credited with discovering the largest amount of munitions. He found four .50 cal. machine gun barrels and more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition buried in a field.

"Well," Jordan said after making the large find, "I can say I found the most rounds."

"We found out just how big a cache it was when we started digging down," Jordan said.

Lance Cpl. Matthew F. Tripp, Jordan's partner, dug up the cache with help from other combat engineers.

"We just kept pulling rounds out of the ground," he said. "There were so many, and I needed help getting them all. It seemed like there was a never-ending supply buried."

Similar episodes unfolded for the Marines in the fields.

This week in Logistical Support Area Anaconda

Civil Affairs building relationships with Iraqis

By Sgt. Mitch Armbruster
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD — The foundation of a good relationship is found in a smile, as the Soldiers of Civil Affairs have a chance to engage in building relationships with Iraqi people.

Members of 1st Corps Support Command G-5, Civil Military Operations, also known as Civil Affairs, improved relationships with the citizens of the local communities by offering aid and support with humanitarian efforts to help the people become more self-sufficient.

"Seeing the kids smile makes this job worth while," said Staff Sgt. Rollie Anderson, Civil Affairs noncommissioned officer in charge. "Many of these kids have a hard life, but by offering them aid they are grateful for what they receive and it makes me happy to give them something to hold on to."

Lt. Col. Ron Kirby, assistant chief of staff G-5 Civil Military Operations, speaks with a community leader about issues in his village.

Building relationships is a major part of the civil affairs mission. They have engaged in water treatment projects and handing out humanitarian aid to assist the community.

"Our job is to work with the people to keep the area safe," said Civil Affairs 1st Sgt. Paul Lewis. "I feel lucky to be here, this is a great place to be."

Civil affairs Soldiers work with local community leaders to bridge the gap between our cultures. These connections help with intelligence and forging a lasting relationship with the Iraqis.

"This is a wonderful mission," Lt. Col. Ron Kirby, Assistant Chief of Staff for G-5 Civil Military Operations. "We've helped with 23 water purification projects for 19,000 Iraqis, who have never had water this clean to drink," Kirby added.

The detachment has given out over 8,000 school and humanitarian aid packages to the families in the local villages, said Kirby.

The Soldier's 'can do' spirit has been great, these Soldiers have done a great job and I'm very proud of them."

Courtesy photos

1st Sgt. Paul Lewis and Sgt. Traci Varrasso give humanitarian aid to children in a village outside of LSA Anaconda in support of a 1st COSCOM civil affairs mission.

Many of the Soldiers in the detachment learned to do the job here in Iraq. The Soldiers were from different units and did different jobs in the military.

The inhabitants in the local villages do everything by hand. Thousands of Soldiers working throughout Iraq are working with the people to help them move forward. When the Iraqis are given a chance to embrace all aspects of the new government they will be able to use the information given to them by the Soldiers helping advance their quality of life.

Construction is complete on three water network projects in Najaf City, Najaf Province. Approximately 12,000 more Najaf residents have increased access to potable water following the completion of the Mualimeen, Al Jamhuriya and Kenda Water Network projects. Each water network project supplies water to approximately 600 homes. An Iraqi company installed and connected more than 36,000 linear meters of distribution lines to three of the cities water networks. There are 37 reconstruction projects programmed for Najaf. Thirty-one projects have started and 11 are complete.

300 Iraqi Soldiers began Basic Combat Training Saturday with the 3rd Iraqi Training Battalion at An Numaniyah. This is the first basic course taught by the recently formed 3rd Iraqi Training Battalion.

This week in Multi-National Division - South East

Duke of York makes surprise visit to MND-SE

By Maj. Steve Melbourne
Basrah Media Operations

BASRAH — British forces in Iraq received a surprise visitor Aug. 20 when HRH The Duke of York flew into Basrah. He was greeted by Col. William Dunham, Royal Marines, Chief of Staff to the General Officer Commanding Multi-National Division - South East, Maj. Gen. Jim Dutton, Royal Marines.

After an update on the overall situation in southeast Iraq, the Duke's first port of call was to the neighbouring province of Maysaan to see the Battlegroup based on the 1st Battalion Staffordshire Regiment. This Battlegroup, which also includes elements from the Kings Royal Hussars (KRH), the Coldstream Guards (CSG), the Royal Regiment of Wales (RRW) and the Joint Helicopter Force (JHF), has borne the brunt of attacks against Multi-National Forces in the South East of Iraq.

The Duke of York meets with British troops during a surprise visit to Iraq, Aug. 20.

The Duke of York is introduced to members of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish at al Shaibah.

During his visit the Duke paid his respects at memorials to the men lost from the Battlegroup in recent months. He took the opportunity to speak to troops from A Squadron KRH, C Company 1 Staffords and 1 Company CSG.

His next stop on this flying visit was to Shaibah Logistics Base where he met the newly arrived 1st Battalion Royal Irish. The Royal Irish fulfill an important role in being the Divisional Reserve which means that they can be employed on any number of different tasks throughout the area of operations.

They also currently provide a security detachment in Baghdad. The Duke also met No. 3 East of England Company, 52nd Lowland Regiment and 51st Highland Regiment, all three being Territorial Army units.

The final visit of the day was to the Iraqi Navy based at Umm Qasr Naval Base. He met the Deputy Operations Commander of the Iraqi Navy and inspected some of the Patrol Boats that carry out essential oil platform security duties in the northern Arabian Gulf. He concluded his visit by meeting members of the small contingent of Royal Navy and Royal Marine reserves, whose mentoring of the Iraqi Navy has played a key role in the development of its capability.

The Duke's hectic schedule concluded with his return to Basrah Air Station here.

British forces transfer basic training center in southeast Iraq

By Maj. Steve Melbourne
Basrah Media Operations

BASRAH — Lt. Col. Toby Bridge, commander, The Kings Royal Hussars, handed over the Basic Training Center (BCT) to the Iraqi Army (IA) and with it over 200 fully trained IA instructors. The Iraqis spent three months training to become trainers, learning from a Multi-National Force led by the British.

They are now capable of instructing new recruits in all aspects of Army and Specialist Training to which they receive the first batch of 630 recruits in early September. The recruits will undergo a basic four-week course that will get them used to all the military aspects of the Iraqi Army and then they will receive two additional weeks of specialist training.

Courtesy photo

Troops participate in the handover ceremony at the Basic Training Center.

The graduation ceremony today saw the BTC flag pass from the MNF instructors to the Iraqi Army. Maj. Gen. Jim Dutton, Royal Marines, commander of Multi-National Division (South East), was in attendance and praised all the staff involved from both the MNF and IA for there dedication and commitment in getting the instructors and the BTC to this stage.

Maj. Gen. Abdul Latif, commanding general of the10 division Iraqi Army, was also in attendance.

He thanked Dutton and the Multi-National Forces for all the support in training the instructors to such a high standard.

The new instructors then gave an excellent demonstration of how to conduct a Snap Vehicle Checkpoint.

Iraqis taking the lead

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Marvie V. Paje

Members of the Iraqi Security Forces receive a briefing on a series of training events which will be conducted at the East Fallujah Iraqi Camp, Fallujah.

U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Robert M Schalk

Kurdish Citizens in the Iraqi city of Duhok participate in a demonstration. The rally was held to protest the proposed title Islamic Republic of Iraq in the countries new constitution.

U.S. Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross

U.S. Army Sgt. James Frazer from the 198th Armor, 155 Brigade Combat Team, takes the blood pressure of a female Iraqi Police recruit as part of a screening process performed at the Police Training Facility in Najaf, Iraq, Aug. 17.

U.S. Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross

Female Iraqi Police recruits take a written test as part of a screening process performed by U.S. Military and Civilian Officials at the Police Training Facility in Najaf on Aug. 17.

U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Robert M Schalk

A child holds a Kurdish Flag during a demonstration in Duhok, Iraq. The rally was held to protest the proposed title Islamic Republic of Iraq in the country's new constitution.