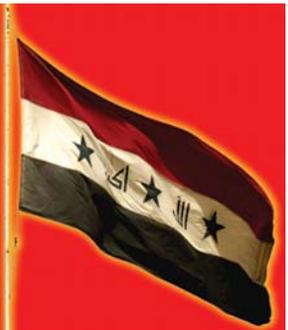




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

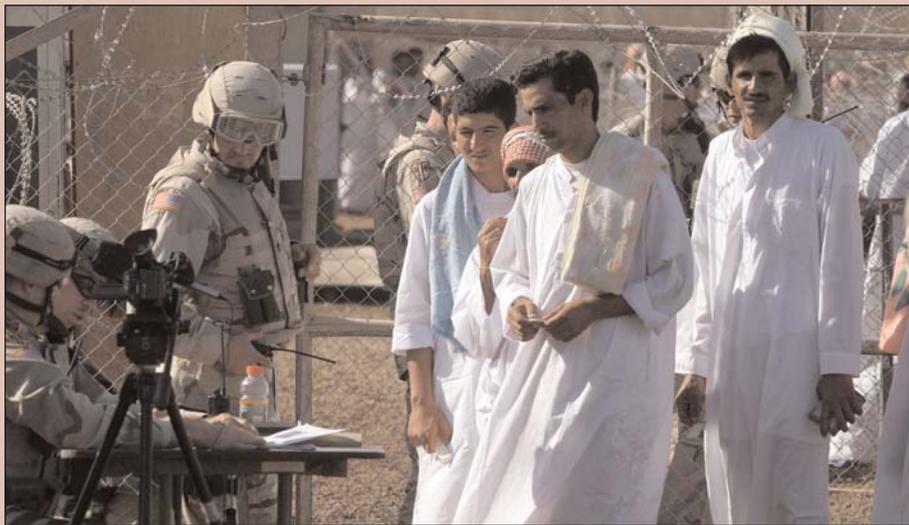


Vol. 1, No. 7

Published by Multi-National Force - Iraq

September 28, 2005

Heading home from Abu Ghraib ...



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Roland Miraco Jr.

With the holy month of Ramadan approaching, Multi-National Forces, in coordination with the Iraqi government held accelerated release boards, releasing approximately 500 security detainees from Abu Ghraib on Sept. 26. Another 500 security detainees are projected to be released this week as part of the accelerated release board process.

Al Qaida in Iraq's Emir of Baghdad killed during joint operation

By Multi-National Force - Iraq

The second most wanted al Qaida terrorist in Iraq, Abu Azzam, is dead.

Iraqi Security and Coalition Forces, in a joint operation in Baghdad, killed Abdallah Najim Abdallah Muhammad al-Juwari, otherwise known as Abu Azzam, Abu Selwah, and Wissam, the al Qaida in Iraq (AQIZ) Emir of Baghdad, at approximately 4:50 a.m. Sunday.

Multiple sources including corroborating information from a close associate of Abu



Abu Azzam

Azzam led Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces to the terrorist safe house where the AQIZ leader was hiding. During the joint operation, security forces raided the location with the intent of capturing the wanted terrorist. Azzam fired on

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Remain vigilant during Ramadan

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

Muslims believe that during the month of Ramadan around 610 A.D. Allah revealed the first verses of the Quran, the holy book of Islam. For more than a billion Muslims around the world Ramadan is a "month of blessing" marked by prayer, fasting and charity.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Next week the month of blessing begins. In addition to the month-long observance, many details about the future of Iraq will begin to take shape both for the Coalition Forces and the Iraqi people. The Iraqi people have two more weeks to study and debate the constitution. On Oct. 15 Iraqis voters will head to the polls and vote on the ratification of their constitution.

Although Ramadan is a peaceful period for most of the Muslims, there are those who will want to take advantage of the holiday. Unfortunately, there is a predictable spike in violence around critical times in the democratic process. We have witnessed it in the past during critical events such as the January elections ... and it will most likely happen during Ramadan.

Terrorists have declared war on the Shias and against every Iraqi that wants to have a say in his or her future.

Iraqi Security Forces, Coalition Forces and the Iraqi government stand together to ensure Iraqis have a choice, a choice they have not made in decades, while terrorists want to kill anyone opposed to their radical views. The difference could not be more clear.

To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, I urge vigilance. To the brave Iraqi people, have a peaceful Ramadan and vote for your future.

Understand Ramadan

By Australian Royal Air Force Sqd. Ldr. Jason Briggs
Multi-National Force - Iraq Strategic Effects

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, represents one of the most significant annual events for all Muslims and commemorates the revelation of the Quran to Mohammed.

Ramadan is a time for reflection, inner control and charity. Ramadan is characterized by Muslims expending less effort on routine tasks and committing more time toward prayer, family and the wider community.

As one of the five pillars of Islam, all Muslims are expected to undertake fasting during Ramadan.

Abstinence from food, drinking, smoking and sexual activity between sunrise and sunset is demanded from all Muslims except the ill, those traveling, young children and pregnant women.

All Muslims are expected to pray five times a day during Ramadan: sunrise, noon, 2:30 to 3 p.m., sunset and late evening. The nights of glory, Oct. 23, 25, 27 and 31, may see extended prayer periods in the evening, and on the night of power, Nov. 3 and 5, many pray all night as one prayer is perceived to be equivalent to 1,000 prayers.

Each evening the daily fasting is broken with a prayer and a

meal, known as the Iftar, after which Muslims customarily visit family and friends.

During Ramadan work continues, although some Muslims only work for a half day, devoting more time to praying and studying the Quran.

The requirement to fast during daylight hours can result in increased fatigue and frustration. Increased traffic in urban areas is likely each day just prior to sunset as many travel home to prepare Iftar, or the evening meal.

Ramadan is characterized by Muslims ... committing more time toward prayer, family and the wider community.

There is likely to be increased movement after dark in most areas based on increased social interaction and attendance at prayers.

Disrespect of Ramadan rituals by Coalition Forces members may invoke verbal or physical responses. Eating, drinking or smoking in front of Muslims during daylight hours or preventing night movement to mosques for prayers are likely to be perceived as offensive. Education of Coalition Forces members will reduce the potential for this type of incident. If eating or drinking in proximity to Muslims cannot be avoided or is essential, most Muslims will accept the circumstances.

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Constitutional referendum a step forward in democracy

By U.S. Navy Lt. Stephen Hartman
Multi-National Force - Iraq

What does the birth of liberty look like? U.S. citizens know from our own history that it is not pretty; it is violent, and it is ugly. But the end result, securing the liberty of a people, is a noble effort for any nation to undertake.

Thomas Jefferson said, "We are not to expect to be translated from despotism to liberty in a feather bed." The Iraqi people understand this and do not expect this to be an easy process. They daily risk their lives and the lives of their families with the sole hope of giving freedom to their children.

Today, the Iraqi Constitutional Referendum is about two weeks away. On Oct. 15 the people of Iraq will decide in a



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Alan D. Monyelle

Iraqi Army Security Forces, with assistance from U.S. Soldiers, provide security for the Tall Afar area.

national election whether to accept or reject their proposed Constitution. There are still unresolved issues, and much like our own constitutional history, there are heated debates and disagreements. However, this is democracy in action and a healthy part of the process. Coalition

Forces have seen influential religious leaders who once took up arms against us, now embracing and focusing their efforts on the political process. During this landmark period, Multi-National Force - Iraq stands ready to provide security assistance while the Government of Iraq leads the way to the referendum.

In the face of serious threats from terrorists and foreign insurgents, the people of Iraq fight for freedom through the power of the vote. If the referendum passes, general elections to seat a permanent government will follow. If it fails, elections to seat another Transition National Assembly to write another Constitution will follow. Whatever the outcome of the vote may be, Iraqi Security Forces, with support from Coalition Forces, will continue to provide security to the Iraqi people so that their voice may be heard.

Abu Azzam

from page 1



Abu Azzam

security forces, who immediately returned fire, killing him.

Azzam was located in a residential high-rise building in Baghdad. Iraqi and Coalition Forces quickly surrounded the area and identified the terrorist's apartment. Upon entry to the apartment, security forces found two women and then took fire from two men in an adjacent room. Security forces immediately returned fire, killing one terrorist and wounding another. The women were unharmed in the firefight.

Security forces departed the location with all personnel directly affiliated with the terrorist and his safe house. The identity of the killed terrorist was confirmed as Azzam within a few hours.

Azzam personally directed and controlled all terrorist activity and operations in Baghdad, and was responsible for the recent vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attacks, which killed hundreds of innocent Iraqis.

Those attacks were executed under his direction and orders. Azzam was the operational commander and the gatekeeper for AQIZ.

Recently captured terrorists have said Azzam was as important, if not more so, than Abu Musab al Zarqawi. As Zarqawi

continues to run and hide throughout Iraq, Azzam provided both misguided spiritual (false Jihad) and operational direction and controlled all finances for AQIZ. He would allocate monies to the various sub-organizations and personnel within the AQIZ network. While Zarqawi's name has widespread recognition, that same notoriety causes him to keep a low profile, only allowing him to operate, coordinate and conduct meetings while on the run from Iraqi and Coalition Forces. Azzam had recently filled the operational void created by Zarqawi's inability to lead his network personally.

As the number two al Qaida terrorist in Iraq, Azzam had a close personal connection with Zarqawi, who trusted him implicitly to direct the operations of the terrorist network.

A recently captured AQIZ member reported that Azzam wanted to meet on numerous occasions with Zarqawi, but the most wanted terrorist would not allow it, most likely due to the risk of Zarqawi's capture. Allegedly Zarqawi stated that Azzam was too important to the network to risk a meeting, according to the detainee.

Now that the Emir of Baghdad is dead, a leadership vacuum has been created, albeit temporarily. Azzam is one of several AQIZ emirs of Baghdad who have been captured or killed over the past two years by Iraqi and Coalition Forces.

Information on terrorists, foreign fighters, and former regime members may be reported by calling the nationwide tips hotline at 130 (within Baghdad) and 01-130 (outside of Baghdad).

Approximately 8,800 in the Najaf Province have access to potable water following the completion of two water treatment units.

National Depot ramps up training, supply efforts

Story and photos by Sgt. Lorie Jewell
Multi-National Security Transition
Command - Iraq Public Affairs

TAJI – Since operations began in May, the Taji National Depot has completed roughly 500 missions by ground and in the air to move equipment and materials to Iraqi Armed Forces units throughout the country.

“The volume of inventory that passes through the Depot is ramping up daily,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Levonda Selph, the Depot’s Coalition commander. Her counterpart, Iraqi Lt. Col. Mohomud, commands the Iraqi side of the operation. The tempo will continue to increase with the hiring of a convoy security and truck fleet dedicated to moving shipments to the units, she said.

With Iraqi Soldiers, contractors and U.S. Soldiers, the Depot is responsible for supplying the logistic needs of 10 divisions of the Iraqi Armed Forces, along with regional base support units. Items

ranging from weapons and body armor to ambulances and pickup trucks are managed by the Depot, which Selph describes as a strategic-level operation and the only one of its kind in Iraq.

In addition to moving supplies and equipment, the Depot’s mission also includes training Iraqi soldiers to operate and maintain it. Iraq’s Ministry of Defense has jurisdiction over the Depot, with oversight from Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq (MNSTC-I).

Preparation for operations began in March with the renovation of nine warehouses and an office building. An inventory management system called Exceed was also established; a private contractor now manages the system.

Since then, 11 more warehouses have been renovated. Construction of a loading dock was completed last month. In three



An Iraqi Soldier assigned to the Taji National Depot moves a load of supplies to a warehouse.



The depot manages the distribution of all types of equipment and supplies headed to the ISF, including these ambulances.

months, the Depot shipped more than 850 vehicles of various types.

Ongoing projects include creating a living area for Iraqi soldiers assigned to the Depot, installing a water and sewage system and building a dining facility.

Sadr City residents see progress every day

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

BAGHDAD — Sadr City residents say they are definitely seeing a difference as nearly \$86.5 million in infrastructure improvements have been completed, with an additional \$246 million ongoing.

Local citizens report their sewers are working, unlike last year when all the lift stations were inoperable with broken pumps, water pressure is better, and they are seeing electric lines going up.

Lt. Col. Jamie Gayton, commander of the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Brigade Troops Battalion, is overseeing the work and says he couldn’t accomplish the mission without the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Gayton pointed out USACE established an office at Forward Operating Base Loyalty, and they work together daily.

The first step in the process is meeting with local Iraqi leaders to determine which projects are priorities for the community.

“We talk to municipal authorities to



Lt. Col. Jamie Gayton (right), commander, 2nd Bgde., 3rd Inf. Div., Brigade Troops Bn., tours Sadr City.

understand exactly how each proposed project fits into the big scheme for them,” Gayton said. “Then we turn it over to the Corps who go out and make an assessment of what needs to be done.”

Gayton also appreciates that USACE has hired local Iraqi engineers who regularly visit the sites to provide quality assurance.

“What I see in the future is for USACE to continue gradually raising the number of Iraqi local nationals who are doing the engineering aspects out there, so it’s acting almost as a transition for us,” he said.

“I see this as a transition process from reconstruction being a military-led operation, to being a Corps of Engineers-led operation, and then to being an Iraqi-led operation. When we first arrived ... residents were allowing people to come in to do work, but they weren’t embracing them.

“Over the past eight months, since we really got in and started doing some good projects, they see the results and the difference has been incredible.

“As we drive through neighborhoods now, people are waving, smiling, cheering,” he said.

Gayton said his battalion’s first priority was cleaning up the trash and sewage that filled Sadr City’s streets. “We immediately reinforced the trash removal program started by the 1st Cavalry Division, as well as renovated the sewage system.

“We continued refurbishing all the sewer lift stations, unclogged the sewer lines, and repaired the sewage line breaks,” he said.

“Now when I ask residents, ‘Are you feeling better off than you were last year,’ they smile and say ‘yes.’”



Heroes of the Week

Coalition Hero helps Iraqi children

By Staff Sgt. Engels Tejeda
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA

ANACONDA — The first thing that struck Sgt. Maj. Tyron McCormack about Iraq was that kids were walking around barefoot in 120 degree weather.

So when friends and family asked him whether there was anything he wanted them to send him, he asked for shoes for the kids. His friends and family from Phillips County, Kan., began to send him over 600 pairs of children's shoes.

Eleven months later, as he returned to his hometown of Agra, Kan., McCormack, operations sergeant major for the 917th Corps Support Group, said his small humanitarian operation turned into a life-altering experience.

"I can leave Iraq feeling like I made a

small difference," he said. "I feel like I touched a few people's lives."

More than a few, said Dr. Muhammed Ismael Ahmad, a medical doctor and local leader with whom McCormack has developed a close working relationship. According to Ahmad, McCormack's operations reached 2,000 to 3,000 Iraqis.

"And I'm using a conservative number," Ahmad said in a letter of appreciation to McCormack.

He noted that McCormack had evolved into the equivalent of a Sheik, or town leader.

McCormack said that after taking the shoes out to the kids, people began asking how else they could help.

At home, his friend Roberta Quanz of Phillips County, spread the word to local organizations and individuals who sent him boxes upon boxes of supplies.

Meanwhile, other Soldiers at Q-West



Photo courtesy of the 917th CSG

Sgt. Maj. Tyron McCormack delivers toys and school supplies to local children near Q-West.

also called home and had supplies sent to McCormack.

Within weeks of distributing shoes, McCormack had built a warehouse of goods for the Iraqis that included boxes of candy, toys, school supplies, clothing and medical supplies.

McCormack plans to continue working with non-governmental organizations at home to get supplies to Soldiers in Iraq, so that they can deliver them to villages.



Heroes of the Week

Iraqi officer shows innovation in leadership

By Pfc. Spencer Case
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — A young Iraqi officer demonstrated innovative thinking during a recent training exercise at Al Kisik, an Iraqi-controlled military facility near Mosul.

2nd Lt. Yasen Taha Fatah, a platoon leader in the 3rd Motorized Transportation Regiment, showed surprising skill in a simulated convoy exercise, U.S. advisors said.

In response to a scenario where his platoon had to clear an intersection, Yasen had his troops dismount to secure the area. When a sniper attacked, he had the dismounted troops pull back into the vehicles, then flanked and suppressed the attacker. Both times, Yasen acted in ways he had not been taught.

"They kept throwing drills at him," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Van Wheeler, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 3rd MTR Military Training Team (MiTT), "and every drill they threw at him, he beat."



Courtesy photo

Iraq Army 2nd Lt. Yasen Taha Fatah.

"Most advisors would agree that the majority of leaders going through this training reacted as they were instructed and according to the applicable battle drill," said U.S. Army Maj. Mark Chitwood, an advisor to the 3rd MTR in an e-mail. "What sets Lt. Yasen apart is that he ... did not merely react, he thought the situation through to the end. As his advisor, it was quite exciting to see this capability in him."

Chitwood continued, "Without hesitation, I would take a convoy into the heart of Baghdad with Lt. Yasen. Though he is still learning, he has all the abilities required to lead men into harm's way and make sound decisions."

Chitwood added that Yasen's leadership has earned the respect of his troops.

"Of all the lieutenants, I feel he receives the most respect from the Soldiers of his platoon, company and regiment. He is mature and has a great ability to make calm, rational decisions during times of stress. ... Lt. Yasen has the ability to shift between leader, mentor and counselor with his Soldiers, and they know that. The Soldiers trust him."



Coalition Partners



Coalition doctors see 100 patients per week

By Lt. Cmdr. Bartosz Zajda
Multi-National Division Central -
South Public Information Office

AD DIWANIYAH — Although caring for sick and injured Soldiers is the primary function for military doctor's here, they also provide medical assistance to Iraqi civilians whenever they can.

Last week doctors from Multi-National Division - Central South helped 100 Iraqis in need of assistance. Since arriving in Iraq MND-CS doctors have helped more than 10,000 Iraqi people, with about 70 percent of the patients being children.

"We help in many different cases. Some of the most difficult surgeries we have performed include working on Iraqis wounded in terrorist attacks," said Polish military



Courtesy photo

Polish doctors from MND-CS perform surgery on an Iraqi patient.

doctors from Camp Echo, here.

"But we also, every week see many patients with bronchitis, pneumonia, burns and injuries. Our everyday mission is to help them. Since the beginning of this year

we have conducted over 100 surgeries, mostly orthopedists," said Polish doctors.

The Ukrainian medical company of the 81st Task Force, stationed in Wasit province, devotes a significant amount of their time and resources every day treating local Iraqis at Camp Delta in Al Kut.

To the majority of Iraqi patients, the help takes place at a checkpoint where they can be seen immediately, but in more severe cases locals are given treatment in the 81st Task

Force medical facility, a hospital run by the medical company.

The Ukrainian military doctors have successfully conducted more than 92 surgeries since their rotation began.

Sword of Peace awarded

SURREY, ENGLAND — One of the last Wilkinson Swords of Peace to be awarded was presented to the British Army at Gibraltar Barracks, Surrey, on Monday to the Joint Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group in Iraq.

The Group disposes of unexploded munitions, provides an emergency response team and mine awareness briefing teams for military and local communities.

The Force also plays a major humanitarian role in southern Iraq. Members conduct various dangerous tasks, including the disposal of a half

million items of unexploded ordnance. The group crossed into Iraq on March 20, 2003, ahead of British units and as part of the U.S. Marine Corps operation to seize the oil fields.

Local community projects were also initiated by the group in partnership with the United Nations office. In addition, a 120-mile sponsored run in southern Iraq raised money for the children of three Soldiers killed in action.

The citation states that the group made a real difference to the conduct of military operations as well as to the local population of Iraq.

Trainers graduate two-week course

AL SULAMANIYA — The U.S. Department of Justice recently graduated 19 Iraqis from a training course at Forward Operating Base Stone.

These trainers will be responsible for training 150 more Iraqis who will work as guards at the new Theater Internment Facility, Fort Suse. Construction at Fort Suse is expected to be complete by the middle of October, and the facility will house approximately 2,000 security detainees.

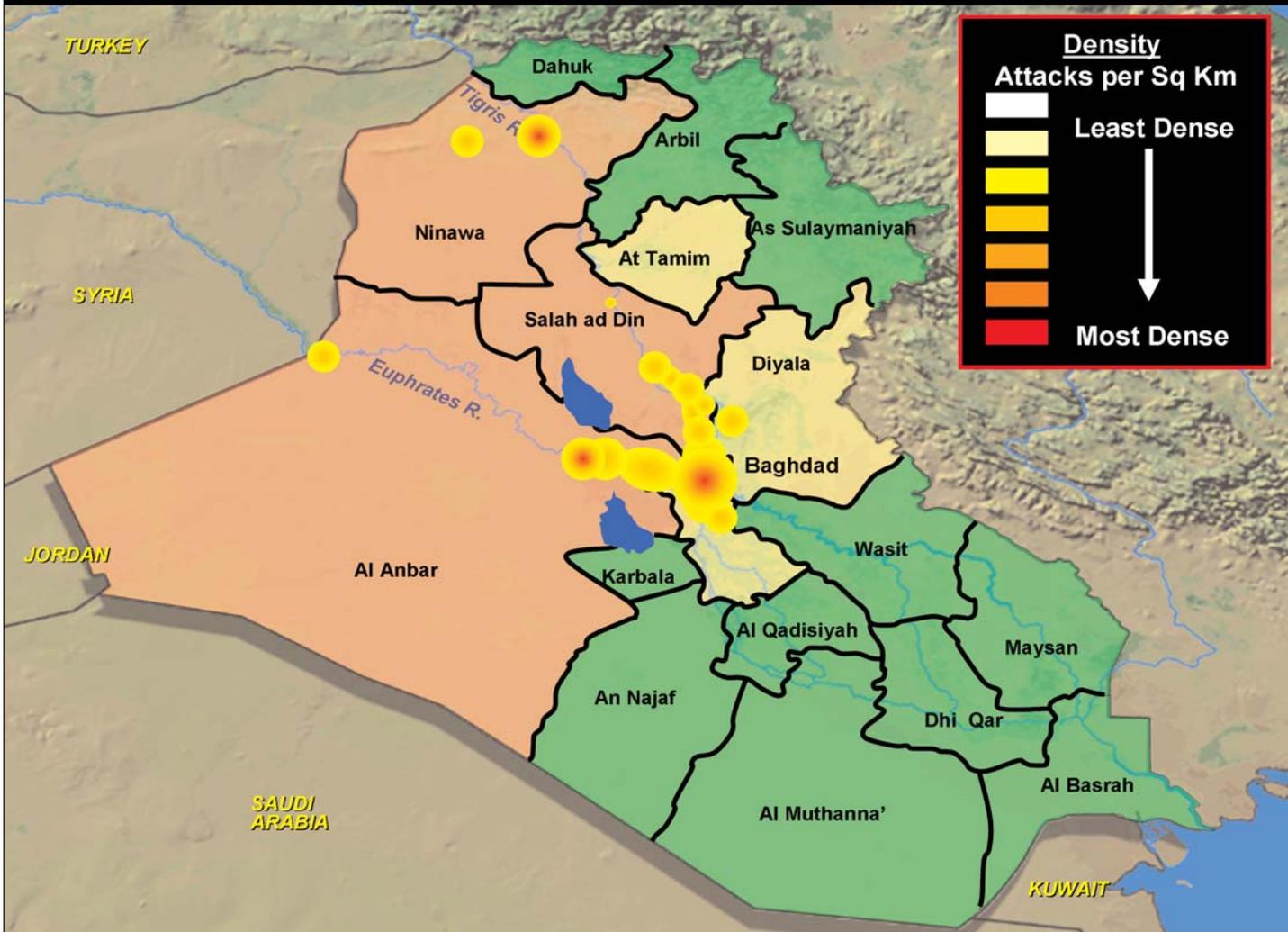
The two-week train-the-trainer course focused on proper techniques and procedures for conducting detention operations as well as humane, high-quality treatment of detainees.

Once the guards receive their training, they will work side-by-side with Coalition Forces at Fort Suse. Once the Iraqis are comfortable with the care, custody and control of the security detainees, Coalition Forces will turn over the facility to the Iraqi Government.

This transition will be the first major step towards the overall transition of detainee operations to the Iraqi Government.

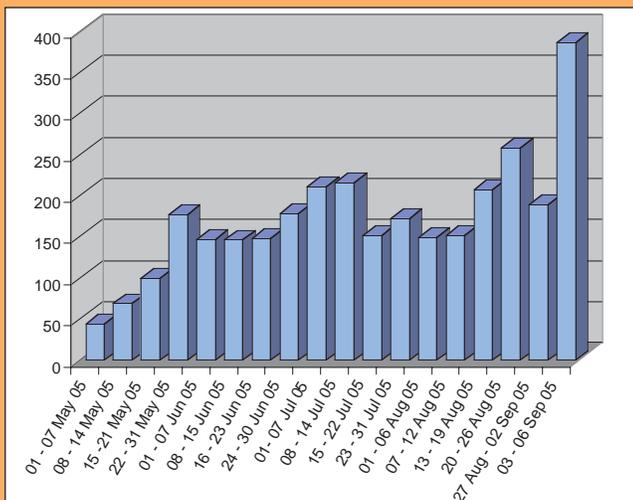
Construction started this week on a \$579,000 Al Ameen water network project in 9 Nisan, Baghdad Province. The estimated completion date is Nov. 7. This water network project will upgrade the existing facilities to an acceptable health standard for the approximately 3,000 residents. The project was funded by the Commander's Emergency Relief Program.

Attacks by Province



National Tips Hotline

Calls received May 8 to Sept. 16



Coalition detains 10 suspected terrorists in Baghdad raids

By Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Coalition Forces captured 10 terror suspects in three separate combat operations Sept. 17.

Shortly after 9:30 p.m., Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment began a cordon and search of suspected safe houses to capture members of a terror cell operating in west Baghdad.

In just over two hours, the Soldiers seized four members of the cell thought to be part of a mor-

tar team that attacked Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces and civilians. Later, Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment carried out another cordon and search in east Baghdad. In one house they found weapons and instructions on how to build a roadside bomb. They also found documents and maps that could have been used to plan an attack.

An hour later, Coalition Forces detained five suspects during a central Baghdad raid. The suspects are believed to have planned and participated in terrorist activities in the Aamel district.

Iraqi Security Forces operations this week in Iraq

By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

Iraqi Security Forces continue to move forward in their resolve to provide sole security for Iraq.

"Their ability to take the lead is improving day by day," said British Army Col. Nigel Jefferson, ISF chief, Multi-National Corps - Iraq plans section. "Their capability is improving."

In Tall Afar this week, Iraqi Army conducted operations independent of Coalition Forces. The city was cleared of insurgents so citizens can vote safely during the upcoming referendum and election.

"In many instances, they would take the lead and be the public face of the

operation," Jefferson said.

The Iraqi Police Force also played an integral part in Tall Afar.

"The 4th Commando Brigade, also known as Lightning Brigade, participated in combat operations in combination with the Iraqi Army," said Lt. Col. Michael Moore, deputy ISF chief, Multi-National Corps - Iraq plans section. Lightning Brigade has since returned to its headquarters in

Baghdad, allowing local police forces to maintain long-term security.

"It's about returning the place to normalcy," Jefferson said. "The operation was a success, but there's a ways to go yet."

The 2nd Commando Brigade, also known as Wolf Brigade, supported Iraqi Army units to provide security for three million Shi'ite Muslims who made the pilgrimage to Karbala last week for the birthday celebration of the 12th Imam.

"They showed a good ability to conduct security operations in support of Muslim tradi-



An Iraqi Army Soldier stands security as local civilians enter a Coalition compound to ask about assistance for house repairs in Tall Afar Sept. 20.

tions," Moore said. The celebration in Karabala was peaceful and without incident.

Iraqis are graduating from ISF training schools, adding to the 190,000 strong force that will be the sole security provider during the upcoming election process.

"It's the Iraqi face that's at the front of this, not ours," said Lt. Col. Patrick Stevens, operations planner, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

Some of those new recruits may find themselves in the 7th Iraqi Army Division, which continues to grow. The first brigade is currently in Al Anbar, and the second brigade will deploy there before the referendum. Another brigade is expected to stand up operations at the end of the year.

Even though the ISF continue to move forward in logistics and operations, there is still a lot of ground for them to cover.

"It's going to be a long process to stand up the Iraqi logistical capabilities," Jefferson said.

It is a process that ISF and CF troops are working to see through to the successful end.



U.S. Navy Photos by Petty Officer 1st Class Alan D. Monyelle

Iraqi Army Soldiers hand out food and water rations as civilians enter various checkpoints in Tall Afar Sept. 19. Iraqi Army Security Forces, with assistance from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and an 82nd Airborne Division unit, are providing security for the region of Tall Afar in order to disrupt insurgent safe havens and to clear weapons cache sights in the area of operation.

Insurgent sentenced to life imprisonment for border crossing

BAGHDAD —The Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI) held 25 trials last week convicting 28 security detainees for various crimes including illegal border crossing and possession of illegal weapons.

One detainee was sentenced to life (20

years) imprisonment for illegal border crossing.

Upon conviction, all defendants are turned over to the Iraqi Corrections Service to serve their sentences.

To date, the CCCI has held 502 trials of

insurgents suspected of anti-Iraqi and anti-Coalition activities threatening the security of Iraq and targeting MNF-I. These proceedings have resulted in 493 individual convictions with sentences ranging up to 30 years imprisonment.



This week in Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Coalition Operations: a week in review

By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

Three major Coalition operations in Iraq continue to progress full-steam-ahead in the Coalition Forces' and Iraqi Security Forces' effort to oust terrorists from the fledgling democracy.

"We will shut them down; it's just a matter of time," said Lt. Col. Bruce Parker, assistant chief of operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

The operations: Restoring Rights in Tall Afar, Sayaid in western Iraq and Thunder in Baghdad, are designed to

remove terrorists, secure the streets for citizens and rebuild infrastructure.

Operation Restoring Rights kicked off two weeks ago to secure the city of Tall Afar for the upcoming constitution referendum and national elections. Thousands of citizens evacuated the city before and during the operation. More than 9,000 citizens have recently returned to their homes.

In the event their property was damaged during the operation, citizens can file claims with the Coalition. Coalition Forces are also prepared to improve the city's infrastructure.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.

U.S. and Iraqi troops review a checkpoint entry list in the town of Tall Afar, Sept. 20.

"We began work on building police stations, roads and schools, as well as cleaning up the trash and purifying the water," Parker said.

The returning citizens are also helping CF and ISF capture anti-Iraqi forces still left in the city.

"They are telling CF and ISF where there are AIF and weapons caches," Parker said.

In one day last week, 173 citizens volunteered for to join the local police force.

In Operation Sayaid in western Iraq, CF and ISF are patrolling the Syrian border and towns along the Euphrates River for AIF.

By building border patrol outposts and conducting check-

points, raids and cordon-and-searches, CF and ISF are stopping terrorists before they attack. The operation also gives ISF an opportunity to show AIF that Iraq is protecting itself.

"The purpose is to provide an enduring presence of ISF in the Euphrates River Valley," Parker said.

In Baghdad, Operation Thunder proves that slow and steady wins the race.

In Baghdad, which is the largest city in Iraq, CF and ISF are conducting 24-hour raids that expose weapons caches, improvised explosive device factories and AIF. CF and ISF continue to patrol, take tips from local citizens and expose AIF before they have an opportunity to strike.

"They're ready," Parker said of CF and ISF troops. They're out there 24/7."



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Alan D. Monyelle

U.S. Soldiers, from 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, provide secondary security at a checkpoint in the outer section of Tall Afar Sept. 19. Iraqi Army Soldiers with assistance from 3rd ACR and an 82nd Airborne Division unit are providing security for the Tall Afar region in order to disrupt insurgent safe havens and to clear weapons cache sights in the area.

Approximately 8,800 in the Najaf Province have access to potable water following the completion of two water treatment units.

MeK members repatriate to Iran

CAMPASHRAF — With assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights, 13 former members of the Iranian Mujahedeen-e Khalq Organization based at Camp Ashraf returned home this month.

These former members requested to be repatriated back to Iran upon arrival at the Coalition-controlled facility. Since late 2004 over 300 former members of the organization have returned home to Iran through the amnesty program provided by the Iranian regime.

Iraqi Army units conducting solo missions

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER — Iraqi Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division are now planning and conducting their own missions, the Iraqi battalion commander said.

“The operation that we conducted is according to information and intelligence that our battalion gathered,” said Col. Dakhel Hassen Mahoumoud. “The targets we have are wanted for conducting [terrorist activity] against Iraqi police, Army and their families. We watched the targets, verified information and found out they meet in certain houses.”

The mission not only achieved its goal on detaining high value targets, but they also worked together, said Capt. David

Byrne, intelligence officer, 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, and a native of Redhook, N.Y.

“They moved through the objectives quickly, and they’re reporting well through their chain of command, so their battalion commander is aware of what’s going on.

“They also used their own communication, moved quickly and had good situational awareness,” Byrne said.

The Iraqi Army had no Coalition help in preparing for this mission.

“We’re here for quality assurance and quality control purposes,” Byrne said. “Basically to watch them and help them when they are doing their after action review and give them some tips for how they can improve and what they really did well.”

“My whole battalion went through special training from special forces by Coalition Forces,” Mahoumoud said. “Every mission done with Coalition Forces we get more experience and training. Every Soldier has gained special skills during the training cycles they conducted with Coalition Forces, which makes the battalion stronger and more effective.”

The Iraqi Soldiers are learning from their training and continue to improve after every mission, he added.

“It’s great to see them doing their own mission based off their own planning and [for me to] be able to assist as they become more autonomous,” Byrne said. “It’s the future of Iraq.”

Kamaliya water, sewer construction underway



IAP/Petroland has a \$30.5 million contract for construction of a sanitary sewer system and trunk lines for Mahalas 757, 759, 765, and 767 and water networks in Mahalas 757 and 759 all in 9 Nissan (south of Sadr City). The work includes installation of a sewer main line pipe and manholes, laterals to homes and businesses, pump stations and trunk lines. The new system replaces open slit trenches and standing raw sewage in the neighborhoods now. The new water distribution network includes main line pipe, laterals, valves and connections to the homes. Construction started Feb. 13, 2005 with required completion April 6, 2006. Currently the project is 45 percent finished. About 155 Iraqi workers are on the crew. Subcontractors include Al-Raihana Construction, Al-Marraya (Mahala 757), Al-Qattera (Mahala 759), Al-Asdiq’ (Mahala 765 and 767).



Coalition prepares Iraqi Army to take control of FOB

By Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
 1st Brigade Combat Team
 Public Affairs, Task Force Liberty

FORWARD OPERATING BASE VANGUARD — Insurgents in Iraq target Iraqi Army Soldiers as well as Coalition Forces Soldiers. In training the IA and turning Iraq over to them, CF must also prepare them for reacting to attacks on their installations.

Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment and 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment here, south of Balad, held a training exercise for the 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade of the 4th Iraqi Division.

The training showed the Iraqi Soldiers how to react to a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED).

The training was part of the relief in place training CF Soldiers were doing with the IA before a transfer of authority scheduled in the near future. CF and the IA have worked together for some time on FOB Vanguard.

“When we first came here, we only had [limited] Coalition Forces,” Jerkins said. “We knew we couldn’t protect the FOB on our own, so we had to integrate the IA.”

The purpose of the exercise, besides the training aspect for the IA, was so CF leaders running the exercise could evaluate the



An Iraqi Soldier asks a passenger in a suspected mock VBIED to exit the vehicle. The passengers were IA Soldiers as well, participating in a react to VBIED attack at FOB Vanguard.

Iraqi Soldiers’ performance. Soon the IA will be in total command of the FOB.

“We want to make sure they are running everything on their own,” Jerkins said. “If they are not actively performing these missions right now, at least they know what their duties and responsibilities are.”

The Iraqi Soldiers said they are benefiting from the training, and they are eager to display their abilities to the CF Soldiers.

“It’s a very good idea,” said Pvt. Azhar Maher, Security Platoon, 4th Bn, 1st IA Bde. “We are going to be running the FOB by ourselves. We will have a chance to prove ourselves by doing well during this exercise and in the future doing the operations without any help



Iraqi Soldiers load a mock casualty into an ambulance after a mock VBIED attack at FOB Vanguard.

from the Coalition.”

Task Force Liberty Soldiers have worked with the Iraqi Army as part of a military transition team since the beginning of their deployment, and say they are sad to be leaving after living day in and day out with the Iraqis.

“I am really going to miss these guys,” said Staff Sgt. Rene Balisco, a 100/442 Inf. medic. “Some of them are like brothers to us.”

MNF-I Operations Sept. 17 to 23

Brigade-level operations:	IEDs found and cleared:	Anti-Iraqi Forces detained:	Foreign fighters captured or killed:
14	102	263	15



Weapons caches found and cleared:
 38

Operators of the Basra Sweet Water Canal celebrated the arrival of 30 new heavy duty vehicles this week. The convoy consisted of dump trucks, fuel trucks, buses, shovels, graders and semi trucks. By providing the equipment to the canal, it becomes the first office in the south of Iraq to become independent and capable to run canal operations without assistance.

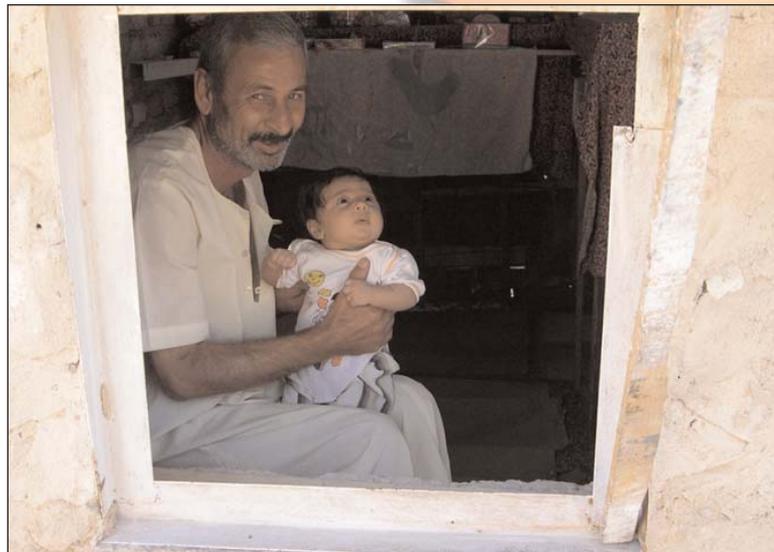
Iraqi mothers and babies will receive better health care with the completed construction of a new 260-bed maternity hospital in Mosul.

Iraqis taking the lead



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Patrick J. Dixon

Iraqi Army Col. Hatem, 2nd Brigade, 8th Division commander, offers a gift to U.S. Army Lt. Col. Alicia Tate-Nadeau, Multi-National Division Central-South public information officer, Sept. 16 at the brigade's headquarters at Al Hilla.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Thomas Rodman

A local citizen sits in his shop while Marines of Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, search and clear houses of weapons and insurgents in Fallujah. 2nd Marine Division conducts counter-insurgency operations with Iraqi Security Forces to isolate and neutralize anti-Iraqi forces, to support the development of Iraqi Security Forces and to support Iraqi reconstruction and democratic elections to create a secure government that enables self-reliance and self-governance.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Patrick J. Dixon

An Iraqi police member provides security at a temporary checkpoint in Al Kut.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Patrick J. Dixon

U.S. Army Sgt. Arthur Hamilton, a videographer from the 55th Signal Company, documents Iraqi Army Col. Hatem, 2nd Brigade, 8th Division Commander, speaking to personnel on Sept. 16 at the 2nd Brigade's headquarters at Al Hilla.



Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Mohammed, commander of 3rd Brigade, 8th Division, signs a document that hands over battle space to the 3rd Brigade Iraqi Army from Coalition Forces on Sept. 15 in Al Kut.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Patrick J. Dixon