



# THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



Vol. 1, No. 15

Published by Multi-National Force - Iraq

November 23, 2005



An Iraqi instructor shows a recruit the proper way to hold his AK-47 rifle at the Iraqi Army Basic Training Academy at Taji. Iraqi recruits learned crucial, basic combat skills as part of an expanded program at the academy. This is the second group of Soldiers to go through an extended cycle of basic training where Iraqi sergeants do the bulk of the teaching.

## Local instructors guide troops as Iraq expands basic training

Story and photos by  
Sgt. Matthew Wester  
Army News Service

**TAJI** – Ten days have been added to Iraqi basic training and a second group of Iraqi Soldiers has begun the new 24-day cycle.

“It started off as a two-week program,” said Staff Sgt. Michael J. Munoz of the 80th Division, who serves as operations noncommissioned officer at the academy.

During the 24 days of training, Munoz said the recruits now learn drill and ceremony, weapons marksmanship, squad-

level movement techniques, room-clearing procedures and how to operate traffic-control points.

Instructors are able to go into greater detail when teaching the individual skills because they have more time than they did during the 14-day cycles, Munoz added.

### **Iraqi NCOs now teach recruits**

At the academy, recruits are taught hand-and-arm signals. All the instruction is in Arabic, no translator is needed. Iraqi non-commissioned officers teach the course.

“We’re at a phase now where we mainly

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# CG's Weekly Message ...

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

The other day, Coalition forces transferred the largest base in Tikrit, Forward Operating Base "Danger" to the Ministry of Finance. Also known as the Tikrit Palace Complex, FOB Danger is perhaps the most significant of all the installation transfers. About 30 military compounds have changed from coalition to Iraqi control.

The massive complex is more than 1,000 acres with 136 buildings. In addition to the buildings, there are more than 60 additional structures on the complex grounds used for logistic, utility, or maintenance functions.

The complex centerpiece is the Presidential Palace built by Saddam Hussein for his mother. It is the largest and most elaborate of the presidential sites built by Saddam Hussein. It is also a symbol of how Iraq's wealth was squandered for his personal use, while the vast majority of Iraqi people remained in poverty. As of Nov. 22, it belongs to and serves the people of Iraq.

This transfer is another key step in replacing the Coalition Forces with Iraqi Security Forces. As the

ISF grows stronger, they are taking the lead in providing security for the nation. From one brigade and 11 battalions in June 2005, to one division, five brigades and 36 battalions as of Nov. 5, Iraqi Forces are increasingly in the

lead. The Iraqi government is taking back more property and battlespace from the Coalition, all according to plan. Battlespace and key landmark turnovers are but part of the incessant march toward democracy.

The biggest step is still to come this December when Iraqis vote for their permanent government. The

Constitutional Referendum showed that given the right environment, one safe and free of intimidation, the people of Iraq will vote for their future.

The referendum saw about 10 million voters turn out and this election promises even more.

To ensure safety and security, there will be more than 6,000 additional ISF on the streets for the election than we had for the referendum — 80,000 more than we had for the elections in January. In a way the palace in Tikrit is really two symbols for the Iraqi people.

For the past, it is the symbol of waste and abuse of the many by the few. For the future, it is a symbol of the prosperity possible through democracy.



**Gen. George W. Casey Jr.**

# Iraqi citizens thwart car-bomb attack

Story and photo by Maj. Russ Goemaere  
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office

**BAGHDAD** — Alert neighborhood watch members in east Baghdad stopped a car-bomb attack Nov. 15.

Shortly before 6 p.m., local residents noticed a suspicious vehicle getting fuel from a roadside gasoline dealer.

When the neighborhood watch members approached the driver, he pulled a pistol and pointed it at them and then attempted to flee.

The citizens tried to stop the suspect, but were unsuccessful, said Oday Fakhani, the leader of the neighborhood watch.

As he fled, the would-be car bomber attempted to hijack a getaway vehicle at gunpoint, but failed in his first attempt. The driver of another vehicle, a taxi, allowed the suspect to enter and took him to a neighborhood in Baladiat, a suburb in east Baghdad.

Meanwhile, Iraqi Police were called to the scene and secured the area around the suspicious vehicle.

The taxi driver returned to the scene after dropping off the suspect.

"The taxi driver told us that during the ride, the suspect used his cell phone to call his uncle to inform him that the operation had failed," Fakhani said.

An Iraqi Police explosives ordnance disposal team was called to the scene to investigate the suspicious vehicle and found it was wired with five 155 mm artillery rounds and other explosives embedded in the trunk and doors.

The EOD team deactivated the explosives.



**Iraqi Police secure a vehicle which had been wired as a potential car bomb with five 155 mm artillery rounds and other explosives in an east Baghdad neighborhood.**

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# New power cable brings reliable electricity

Story by Jenna Bisenius

Iraqi Project and Contracting Office

**BAGHDAD** — Residents in the northern Baghdad district of Adhamiyah will soon have more reliable electricity, due in part to the installation of 2.5 miles of underground power cable. The cable will connect two new substations, helping bring power to about 2,500 to 3,000 homes.

Experts expect the power cable project, which began in July, to be finished this month. The Project and Contracting Office's electricity sector is overseeing the \$1.4 million project; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Regional Division, is responsible for quality control.

The underground cable will take 33,000 volts of power from one substation to another, where it will be converted down to 11,000 volts. From there, power will feed to a distribution network of poles, cables, and overhead lines supplying electricity to homes and businesses.

During its active phase, the project employed about 100 Iraqi workers per day. They performed power cable work by hand, from digging trenches, laying cable to the sidewalk restoration. Employing Iraqi workers helped the local economy by keeping more dollars in the surrounding community.

The electricity sector is one of four PCO sectors managing reconstruction projects throughout Iraq. The other sectors are oil, public works and water, and facilities and transportation.

In total, the PCO Electrical Sector is responsible for 434 projects valued at about \$3.2 billion. To date, the Electricity Sector has



Photos courtesy of Iraqi Project and Contracting Office

**Workers break up and remove asphalt in preparation for the digging of a power cable trench along the streets of Baghdad.**

completed more than 80 projects totaling an estimated \$660 million. An estimated \$1.3 billion is being used on projects that are now in progress, leaving \$1.2 billion for remaining projects.

The majority of 352 remaining Electricity Sector projects are scheduled for completion by December 2006.

## U.S., Iraqi medics work together; treat families

Story by Spc. Barbara Ospina

1st Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs

**ZAGILBANA** — Medics of 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment joined manpower, supplies and compassion with medics from the Iraqi Army to conduct a medical civilian assistance program mission for the people of Zagilbana.

"We must have treated over 100 people, probably more" said 2nd Lt. Brian Mason, the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment Medical Officer.

Although five artillery battalion medics participated, the show was run by the Iraqi Army.

"Most of the patients were treated by the Iraqi Army medics," Mason stated. "We let them handle as much as possible."

According to Mason, most of the treat-

ments were for cold-like symptoms, though they treated a few chronic issues.

Once the medics had set up the temporary aid station, the battalion's psychological operations detachment drove up the tallest hill in the small village and broadcasted the news that Coalition Forces had arrived and were providing free medical attention. Men brought their family members to the clinic as soon as the word reached the dusty streets.

"Within five minutes we had citizens showing up for medical attention," Mason said. "The women formed their own line, and the men brought in their children."

The only female medic, Spc. Carmen Lozano attached from Company C, 426th Brigade Support Battalion, turned out to be one of the most valuable assets to the mission, said Mason.

"The majority of the women patients we treated were of the Arab culture," Mason

said. "It was only respectable to have a female treat the women."

Some patients arrived with serious illnesses and in need of long-term care.

"When we received a patient with a chronic illness, we gave treatment for the present symptoms, but we tried to express the fact that they need to make appointments at the medical facility in Tuz," Mason said. "Even though we wanted to help them, we gave them advice and directed them to a facility that could provide long-term care."

By early afternoon many villagers walked away having been treated with care and medication, and Mason said that even the village Muktar (a highly respected village elder) and his sons visited the station to show their support for the operation.

The mission was deemed a success when the temporary aid station ran out of basic supplies and medications before noon.

# Operation Clean Sweep nets 50 terror suspects

**Story and photo by  
Sgt. Josh H. Hauser**  
2nd Force Service Support Group

**BAGHDAD** — Iraqi and U.S. forces detained dozens of terror suspects during searches in south Baghdad as Operation Clean Sweep continued to clear neighborhoods of terrorist activity.

“Operation Clean Sweep was intended to clean out an area that was known to be used as a way for insurgents to come towards Baghdad from the south as well as an area that a lot of (vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices) and IEDs were coming from,” said Lt. Col. Everett Knapp, commander of 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment.

In anticipation of the Dec. 15 nationwide elections, the battalion as well as Iraqi forces from the 4th Public Order Brigade and 1st Commando Brigade, raided about 350 homes and detained 49 suspected ter-

rorists. Military officials said 10 of the suspects were forwarded to detention facilities.

Some of the U.S. Soldiers set up the outer cordon of the mission while others shadowed their Iraqi counterparts during the operation in late October.

“The Iraqi Soldiers really took the lead (on this mission),” Knapp said. “They don’t need translators; they can tell who the good guys are and who doesn’t belong in a certain situation.”

During the Oct. 15 Constitutional Referendum vote, clearing the area of possible dangers to the democratic process was one of the reasons the U.S. Soldiers swept through the fields, clearing every building that stood in their path.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dan Balda

**Iraqi Commandos conduct clearing operations with Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry.**

“We want the people to see the Iraqi Security Forces protecting them,” Knapp said. “This election has nothing to do with us. This whole operation is about making this area safe for the Iraqi people to see their own Soldiers protecting them.”

1st Lt. Jim Waters, of Company C, 1/184th Infantry, said his Soldiers joined Iraqi Commandos during the operation.

“The message we’re trying to convey is that

the Iraqi government and the Iraqi Security Forces are capable of securing the country,” Waters said. “The citizens of Iraq who are in cooperative support of the new government don’t have anything to fear from the power of the American military or the power of Iraq’s security forces.”

## Basic

from page 1

just advise the Iraqi instructors,” said Sgt. 1st Class Naymon Mack, an advisor at the academy who also serves in the 80th Division.

“Two years ago, we started off with Americans giving all the training. American drill instructors did all the training through interpreters,” Mack said. “We’ve moved to another level.”

### Level of training improves

The recruits leave the academy better prepared for the challenges of combat.

The Iraqi trainees carry AK-47 rifles on their shoulders as they march smartly from one instruction area to another. When a drill sergeant calls them to attention, they shout in unison, “Long live Iraq!”

In the Iraqi Army, Soldiers are assigned to a unit, attend basic training and then go back to their unit after the training is over.

“The units can see a difference between the Iraqi Soldiers who have attended basic training and those who have not,” Munoz said. “There is a difference in discipline as well as skills.”

Discipline is crucial for the troops in training, who are sure to see action while defending their country.

“In the U.S. Army, when we graduate basic training, we don’t know for sure if we’re going to be in combat or not,” Munoz said. “When these guys graduate, they know they’re going to be in



**An Iraqi Army recruit shoots an AK-47 rifle at the Iraqi Army Basic Training Academy at Taji, Iraq on Nov. 2. Iraqi recruits have learned crucial, basic combat skills as part of an expanded program at the academy.**

combat.”

And the Soldiers will take on an active role.

“Once they finish their training, within a couple of weeks they are outside the wire conducting patrols,” Mack said. “It is very important that they work as hard as they can to learn everything they need to know.”

### Iraqi instructors are motivated

During rifle-marksanship training, the Iraqi cadre members moved the recruits’ arms into proper firing positions and gave them tips for acquiring targets while standing and on the move. The Iraqi Soldiers asked questions, making sure they were positioned exactly as they were instructed. The instructors’ techniques are hands-on, and they are determined to teach the Iraqi Soldiers to a high standard.

“They’ve been doing a good job training the Iraqi soldier recruits since we’ve handed over things to the Iraqis,” Munoz said. “They’ve got it down as far as training Iraqi troops.”

In a couple of weeks, the troops of this second expanded cycle will graduate, go back to their units and conduct missions to combat the insurgency.

The Americans working at the academy see the basic training program as an important part of transitioning Iraq’s defense to Iraqi forces.

“(The Iraqi instructors) are very motivated,” Mack said. “They want to get things done.”



# Heroes of the Week

## Navy corpsmen follow patients to the front

Story and photo by  
Sgt. Josh H. Hauser  
2nd Force Service Support Group

**HUSAYBAH**—Marines involved in Operation Steel Curtain rely heavily on each other, their weapons and training for mission success.

However, an invaluable asset to any Marine Corps unit is the brave personnel who follow them into battle: the Navy Corpsmen.

Tasked with maintaining the medical health and safety of the Marines, these sailors travel with their Marines from state-side command to the front lines, caring for them each step of the way.

Dedicated to the medical needs of Marines during peacetime and combat, these select few hospital corpsmen, affectionately called “Doc” by their Marines, must complete the Field Medical Service School prior to attaching to a Marine unit.

The process is entirely voluntary but viewed as a privilege by those who have chosen what they call the “green side” of Navy service.

“The Navy side is a little more relaxed, so this is a real change,” Seaman Lester E.

Spence, a corpsmen assigned to 8th Engineer Support Battalion, Combat Logistics Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), said. “There is a lot of trust between Marines and corpsmen; there has to be.”

And that trust is crucial in a combat environment.

“My Marines know that if anything happens to them, I’ll run in there to help them no matter what the situation,” the 21-year-old Euclid, Ohio, resident said. “If I have to put my life in danger, I will. That’s why I’m here: to be with my guys.”

The Marine Corps sense of camaraderie also extends to the corpsmen who attend to them, according to Seaman Manuel A. Arciniegas, a corpsmen with 8th ESB.

“If I’m not on a convoy with my guys, they freak out,” the 29-year-old Miami resident said. “They know I’m here to look after them and they look after me.”

Corpsmen here deal with the horrors of war at a moment’s notice. Facing blast injuries, burns, broken bones and gunshot wounds, they provide treatment even under



Seamen Manuel A. Arciniegas (left) and Lester E. Spence treat a resident of Husaybah, Iraq, outside of a forward operating base here.

fire. They are the first line of treatment for the service members here.

“We’re basically a paramedic in the field,” Arciniegas said. “Any medical care we can provide to our patient within our means, we do.”

But corpsmen also act as caregivers to the enemy and anyone else who may be injured on the battlefield.

While Marines continue operations to ensure a free and democratic country for the people of Iraq, they can do so knowing that the Navy’s dedicated corpsmen are there for them each step of the way.

## Aviation mechanic a power saver for Anaconda

Story by Sgt. Mitch Armbruster  
207th Mobile Public Affairs  
Detachment

**LSA ANACONDA** — Electricity powers living areas and workstations for the Soldiers and civilians on Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

Sgt. James Foster, noncommissioned officer in charge of the electrical support shop with the 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Maintenance Company, reworked the electricity and power flow for the company to increase productivity on LSA Anaconda.

“The poor electrical conditions are unsafe. We had bare wires, overloaded circuits and too much amperage running

through cables,” Foster said.

Foster builds machines, designs circuitry, programs robots, and sets up automation systems in the civilian world. He owns his own business at home and is familiar with the work that he was tasked to do at LSA Anaconda. Foster was chosen to run a special team for the 4/159th AVM to handle electrical problems.

“With that knowledge I was able to build stuff out of junk,” Foster said.

He was given two apprentices to help him with projects. The aviation hangers were in bad shape at the start of the company’s deployment.

Foster used innovative techniques to build panel equipment and switches for the electricity problems the unit was facing in

the hangers they used to do maintenance on helicopters.

Foster’s work moved from the hangers to the living areas and offices around the worksite. All of the work that Foster did allowed the 4/159th the freedom to move away from using multiple generators. He was able to consolidate the power that 12 generators were doing saving fuel. His efforts save 49 gallons of fuel every eight hours.

Foster and his fellow Soldiers of the 4/159th have worked hard to keep helicopters flying. His efforts with the electricity made the jobs of the maintenance people easier by giving them more light, more equipment use, and an overall better work area.



## Iraqis securing Samarra with help from the MiTT

Story and photo by  
Pfc. Joshua R. Ford

Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public  
Affairs Office

**SAMARRA**—The 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, is bringing Iraq one step closer to becoming a democratic, independent country.

Soldiers from 3/69th Armor's Military Transition Team have been training Soldiers in the Iraqi Army's 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, since March.

The MiTT's mission is to train the Iraqi Army Soldiers to conduct operations on their own. Twelve MiTT Soldiers train the Iraqi staff officers while the 3/69th Armor line units train 2nd Battalion line troops.

"We are trying to teach 2nd Battalion's officers how to run a battalion and we have been teaching their line units how to conduct raids and patrols," said Sgt. 1st Class Milton Evans, MiTT team leader, 3/69th Armor. "When we first got these guys they were pretty green," Evans said. "Since then I have seen a lot of progression."

"We have trained the Iraqi troops the same way we would train U.S. Soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Marcos Rico, MiTT, team leader, 3-69th Armor. They first go through

a basic training then go on to their advanced individual training."

Because the Iraqi Army is in the early stages of development, the 3-69th Armor Soldiers providing the Iraqi Soldiers with armored vehicles, weapons and advanced individual training, said Maj. Philip P. Graham, MiTT officer-in-charge, 3/69th Armor. "This gives the Iraqi Soldiers the extra equipment to get the job done."

The Iraqi troops from 2nd Battalion put their training to the test on the tough streets of Samarra. There they man four checkpoints and run independent operations such as raids and patrols.

When the Iraqi troops started conducting operations in Samarra, Soldiers with the MiTT would go to make sure the Iraqi Army troops were professional about the mission.

"Now, it has gotten to the point where we will send the Iraqi Soldiers out on mis-



**Soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, get ready to convoy to Samarra, from Forward Operating Base Speicher.**

sions alone and we will observe them from the tactical operations center," said Rico.

During October's Constitutional Referendum the Iraqi Soldiers were instrumental in securing Samarra. The Iraqi Army manned checkpoints, voting booths and secured ballot boxes in Samarra with little help from U.S. Soldiers.

"The Iraqi Army Soldiers are doing a good job," said Graham. "They are leaning forward and trying to do more for the people of Iraq. We are getting great strides with all the Iraqi Army units in the area."

## Iraq Army's 3rd Brigade to secure Wasit Province

Story by Lt. Col.  
Sylwester Michalski

Multinational Division Central South  
Public Information Office

**AL KUT** — A big step was taken to hand over security in the Wasit Province as the 3rd Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division from Al Kut was inspected and certified by members of the Multinational Division Central South.

The unit is capable of planning and conducting military activities independent of U.S. and Coalition forces.

Members of the Ukrainian's Military Transition Team guided the Iraqi Soldiers through tactical, medical and special training mission. They also conducted 12 joint operations to evaluate the brigade's readiness, synchronized with local police and government.

The 3rd Brigade belongs to 8th Iraqi Army Division. It consists of three battalions based throughout the Wasit province.

About 2,500 Soldiers are equipped in light armored vehicles and have been trained on an assortment of different weapons.

The 3rd Brigade has already put their training to work, setting up more than 50 checkpoints and 15 mobile patrols to protect key infrastructure. They also provided security during the Nov. 15 Referendum on the Iraqi Constitution.

The next step for the 3rd Brigade is to help certify the entire 8th Division, in December. It will be another full division to help secure Iraq.

**M**ore than 1,400 students will have a better learning environment and a brighter future with the completed renovation of two schools in Baghdad Province.

**T**he completion of the Ramadi Headquarters Fire Station now provides 400,000 residents with increased fire security, a training facility for firefighters, and command and control over other fire stations.



# Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces' Operations Review



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

This week in Iraq, 526 insurgents were detained or killed and 104 weapons caches were discovered during 355 combined operations throughout the country. More than 30 percent of those operations were conducted independently by Iraqi Security Forces.

In Operation Steel Curtain, Iraqi Army Soldiers and Coalition troops assigned to Regimental Combat Team - 2 began clearing the Ramana area Nov. 18, which is west of Ubaydi on the northern side of the Euphrates River.

Operation Steel Curtain is designed to restore Iraqi sovereign control along the Iraq-Syria border and destroy the al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists operating throughout the al Qaim region.

This offensive is part of the larger

## MNF-I Operations Summary: Nov. 12-18



Courtesy photo

**Combined operations: 355**  
**IEDs found and cleared: 146**  
**anti-Iraqi forces detained: 526**  
**foreign fighters captured**  
**or killed: 15**  
**Weapons caches found**  
**and cleared: 104**



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Bryson K. Jones

**An Iraqi soldier from 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Infantry Division conducts his daily patrol on the streets of Fallujah.**

Operation Sayaid (Hunter), designed to prevent al Qaeda in Iraq from operating in the Euphrates River Valley and to establish a permanent Iraqi Army security presence in the al Qaim region.

Also in the western province, Approximately 150 Iraqi Army soldiers and 300 Marines and Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Division began Operation Bruins in northern Ar Ramadi on Nov. 19.

Operation Bruins is part of a series of operations in Ramadi. Iraqi Army soldiers and U.S. forces have conducted a number of cordon and sweep operations in Ramadi and the surrounding area to disrupt insurgent activity. Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces aim to stop insurgents from using the city as a base of operations and to secure Ramadi and its suburbs for the upcoming Dec. 15 national elections.

Operation Bruins comes on the heels of Operation Panthers, which disrupted terrorist operations in the Sophia district of eastern Ramadi. During Panthers, 2nd Brigade Combat Team discovered weapons caches and detained suspected insurgents. They successfully repelled an insurgent attack in which 32 insurgents

were killed in downtown Ramadi Nov. 17.

Attacks against Iraqi and U.S. Forces in the Ramadi area have decreased 60 percent in the last few weeks, as a result of these ongoing operations.

Operation Panthers employed approximately 150 Iraqi Army soldiers and 300 Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division and cleared an area of

Ramadi known as the Sufia district.

Most of the fighting centered around the Abdullah Al-Karber (Ramadi) Mosque in central Ramadi. Marines and Soldiers from a nearby U.S. Army outpost reported that they received sustained small arms fire originating from the mosque.

Iraqi Army soldiers moved in to clear the mosque of insurgents and discovered AK-47 shell casings at the mosque and other signs of fighting. The bodies of 17 insurgents were also found in the vicinity of the mosque.

In Iskandariyah, Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry, 155th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) discovered a weapons cache of 287 82 mm mortar rounds. Five individuals suspected of insurgent activities were also detained.

In the north central region of Iraq, Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers found and disposed of four weapons caches and an IED on Nov. 14, with the help of several local citizens.

Iraqi citizens continue to report locations of weapons caches as they grow weary of being victimized by terrorists.

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## Operations

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In the largest discovery of the day, Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 5th Division of the Iraqi Army seized 38 120 mm mortar rounds and other military hardware near Baqubah after receiving a tip from an area resident.

Several Iraqi children led Soldiers from the 720th Military Police Battalion to two caches of denoting fuses in Ad Dujayl. The materials were removed by an explosive ordnance disposal team.

A Balad citizen led Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team to an IED made from two large mortar rounds that had been assembled in a field where it waited to be placed on a road.

Near Kirkuk, the Provisional Joint Coordination Cell informed the troops from the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team of a cache containing 13 mortar rounds.

Task Force Band of Brothers Soldiers also unearthed and disposed of two rocket-propelled grenade rounds, two hand grenades and 500 rounds of small arms ammunition near Samarra.

Every cache discovered and taken out of the hands of terrorists in this important area helps achieve the goal of a safe and secure Iraq.

Insurgents also failed to disrupt the Samarra power grid when they blew up a power line tower southwest of the city on Nov. 16.

Soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 5th Division observed the explosion and saw a vehicle fleeing the scene. Two local men suspected of attempting to destroy the power grid were detained during a search of a nearby home.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Security Forces and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers conducted search-and-rescue operations in the wake of two suicide car bomb attacks Nov. 18.

At least three Iraqi civilians were killed and 43 others were wounded in the attacks near the Al-Hamra Hotel on the Karradah Peninsula. There were no Task Force Baghdad casualties.

Iraqi Police and Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 5th Iraqi Army Brigade secured the site and took charge of the rescue operation as Iraqi firefighters put out the fires caused by the blasts.

Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 92nd Engineer Battalion and the 36th Engineer Group and medics from 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, supported efforts to rescue trapped Iraqi civilians.

The Iraqis handled the larger portion of the mission with great success.

"The diligence of the local rescue forces was excellent as they immediately took the lead in response and recovery efforts," said Capt. Daniel Green, the battalion surgeon.

## Iraqi electoral process

### The road to democracy

**Commentary by Maj. Lawrence King**

Deputy Chief of Staff, Strategic Effects Directorate  
Communications Division

The Iraqi people have made monumental strides toward a free and democratic national government.

On Jan. 30, the people of Iraq held the first democratic election in three decades and formed an interim Iraqi government and a transitional national assembly. It is the job of the TNA to draft the new Iraqi constitution. Fifty-eight percent of Iraqis eligible to vote participated in the January election.

On Oct. 15, a general referendum took place to approve the nation's new constitution. There was only one question on the ballot: yes or no. The people approved their new constitution by a nationwide 79 percent majority vote. This time, despite the threats of terrorist attack, 63 percent of eligible Iraqis cast their votes.

Under the rules of the Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period, regardless of the majority vote, had three governorates voted against the constitution (each by a two-thirds majority) the constitution would have been defeated. That would have meant December's election wouldn't be for a permanent Iraqi government, but for a new TNA which would be tasked with drafting another constitution.

The Anbar and Salahadeen governorates voted against the constitution by a two-thirds majority. The Ninewah governorate voted against it by a majority vote but less than two-thirds. Since only two governorates voted against the constitution by a two-thirds majority, the constitution passed.

The next step on Iraq's road to democracy is a national election which will be held in Dec. 15. The people of Iraq will elect a 275-seat Council of Representatives to serve for a four-year term. The Council of Representatives will select the president of Iraq and two deputy presidents (the presidency council). The president will, in turn, appoint the Iraqi prime minister.

Around 320 entities and 21 coalitions are registered with the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq as candidates for the December election. Iraqis will be able to vote by party or may select independent candidates.

It is interesting to note that 97 percent of eligible Iraqis are registered to vote compared to only 72 percent of Americans. Under the provisions of the TAL, the new Iraqi government will be seated no later than Dec. 31.

Truly, the democratic nation of Iraq is on its way!

**R**enovation work is complete on three railroad station projects in the Diwaniyah District of the Qadisiyah Governorate. All three station renovations include new bathrooms, generator rooms, a kitchen and sleeping quarters for the stationmaster.

## Civil affairs team rebuilding an economy

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Ronna M. Weyland  
Marine Expeditionary Force

**FULLUJAH** — With more than two months in Iraq under their belts, Marines from Team 4, Detachment 4, 6th Civil Affairs Group, 2nd Marine Division, are focused on their mission helping the Iraqi people.

“We are currently working on the upcoming election and projects that can help steer the country into economical development,” said Chief Warrant Officer Gregory A. Melotte, a 30-year veteran, and Madison, Wis., native. “The more jobs the better. The projects we are working on will help revitalize Fallujah.”

The team’s projects cover water treatment plants, electricity restoration and school renovations. There are eight schools under reconstruction in their area of operation.

The team interacts with local leaders in the community to ensure projects are getting accomplished.

Melotte’s team also oversees projects started by UNICEF and believes the children are an important reason for being

here.

“I do this for the children and the future of the Iraqi people,” he said.

Melotte added the focus should be about the Iraqis and not the Marines.

“It’s about the Iraqi people having faith in their own system,” he said. “It’s about putting their face on everything, so the [Iraqi] people have faith in the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police.”

This belief is filtered throughout the team and each member knows what needs to be accomplished during their tour here.

“We are here to see that the democratic government gets on its feet through economic growth and a firm infrastructure,” said Gunnery Sgt. Kevin S. Tuite, a team chief with the detachment.

The small team is made up of reservists from across the United States and ranges in levels of experience. The provisional group came together for the first time in



**Gunnery Sgt. Kevin S. Tuite, team chief, Team 4, Det. 4., 6th Civil Affairs Group, 2nd Marine Division, watches as Iraqi children help carry bundles of their country’s flag into the Ministry of Education’s office in Fallujah.**

Camp Lejeune, N.C., for predeployment training prior to coming forward.

Tuite, a Sterling, Pa., native, said his team was focused on what needed to be done and his Marines hope to be able to see the projects through to the end.

“Hopefully, at the end of seven months, things won’t be the same,” said Sgt. Wayne Hermance.

## New pumps provide freshwater to Mendeli

Story by J. Anajar  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Gulf Region Division

**BAGHDAD** — Salty land is just one of the obstacles farmers face in central and southern Iraq.

However, more than 35,000 farmers and residents are benefiting from a \$3.9 million project overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that began in Aug. 2004, and was completed in Aug. 2005.

In 1998, a pressing demand for freshwater led to establishing the Arazaza drainage pump station. The project was scheduled to benefit about 360,000 acres of agrarian lands by ridding them of the salty water and pumping it to Arazaza Lake. There were five pumps; two with a 5.5 cubic square meter capacity, and the other three with a 3.8 cubic square meter capacity.

An expansion of the agrarian lands in the area led to an increase in salty water. Twelve horizontal drainage pumps were installed to meet the greater demand, but soon broke

down because of poor quality.

Now, a reconstruction campaign has begun, covering all the sectors, including those that suffered from neglect for a long period.

One of the projects that the Ministry of Water Resources has taken interest in is the Arazaza project. The ministry worked on replacing three 3.8-meter pumps, installed two more pumps with the capacity of five cubic meters, and provided training for the staff on how to maintain and operate the pumps in addition to repairing electric transformers with 12 horizontal pumps.

In the town of Mendeli there is a pump station named after the district. This station provides Mendeli and Qazanya districts with water that can be used by residents and watering farms. Five horizontal pumps were replaced with new ones with increased capacity that push water 240 meters high.

There is also an additional project benefiting 60,000 citizens that links Mendeli pump station with the town of Mendeli. The \$22 million project began in July, and employed 20 local workers daily. The project will reach completion in January.

# Airmen give Iraqi children cheer, supplies

Story by Tech Sgt. Mark Getsy  
Air Force News

**UMM QASR** — Coalition forces brought some much needed cheer to school children in Umm Qasr, when they conducted a humanitarian relief mission to the Iraqi town.

Airman from the 586th and 886th Expeditionary Security Forces squadrons here joined forces with their Army and British counterparts to delivered more than 1,000 school supplies and toys Nov. 14.

The supplies included most of the things children need to successfully complete a school year: Pencils, pens, notebooks, rulers and scissors — to name a few. Other donations included clothing, stuffed animals and soccer balls.

The smiling faces of school children — who anxiously awaited the delivery — met the convoy of approximately 40 coalition troops.

The troops interacted with the children, handing out candy and taking photos with them, while they safely stored the supplies town council building.

According to one of the event coordinators, Tech. Sgt. John Harper of the 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, the idea for the project started in August.



U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. Michael G. Johnson

**Senior Airman Jana Sautter hands out some treats to Iraq children during a humanitarian relief mission in Umm Qasr, Iraq. Coalition forces delivered more than a thousand school supplies and toys to the children Nov. 14. Airman Sautter is assigned to the 568th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.**

Harper took the idea and began calling his church and police department in Brownwood, Texas, for donations.

“Once I contacted them, many of the church’s Sunday school classes and the police department started getting donations ready,” Harper said. “I expected a few boxes — but was very surprised when I received over 50.”

Harper extended the invitation to the rest of the camp — and the got a great

response. He eventually received more than 300 boxes from different organizations throughout the United States.

For one Airman, it was the opportunity she hoped she would have a chance to take part in while deployed to Iraq.

“It feels good knowing I could give something back to these children,” said Senior Airman Jana Sautter, deployed from Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. “I usually do a lot of vol-

unteering for children back home — such as organizing Christmas parties. I wanted to do something here.”

Harper hopes this will be one of many more humanitarian efforts.

“We want to change the image local people have of us,” said the Guardsman from Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. “We wanted them to know we are not the terrible people they think we are — and that we are here to help them.”

## Iraqi Central Court rules life sentence for detainee

**BAGHDAD** — The Central Criminal Court of Iraq held 18 trials last week convicting 24 security detainees for various crimes including crimes against the security of the state, possession of illegal weapons and illegal border crossing.

One security detainee received a life sentence (20 years) for crimes against the security of the state.

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

To date, the CCCI has held 721 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 658 individual convictions with sentences ranging up to 30 years imprisonment.

## TF Baghdad nabs 18 suspects in mission planned and led by IA

**SADR CITY** — Iraqi Army Soldiers raided the residences of suspected terrorists in Sadr City and detained 18 men Nov. 14.

Fifteen of the men are suspected members of a terrorist group responsible for murders and kidnappings in Baghdad.

The raids were planned and led by Iraqi Soldiers.

“The Iraqi Army did a great job on this one they got the targets quickly and quietly,” said Sgt. 1st Class Luis Molina, operations sergeant with 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment.

All the detainees are being processed by the Iraqi judicial system.

**Sgt. Shawn Cutler, a Task Force Baghdad Soldier, informally questions local teens during a raid that captured 15 terrorists in Sadr City.**

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ben Brody





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

An Iraqi Army Soldier from the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, waves cars through a security checkpoint, Nov. 15, in Sara Badi. This operation is being assessed by the Polish Military Transition Team to certify that the 3rd Brigade can conduct proper military operations.



# Iraqis taking the lead



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ben Brody

Iraqi Army Soldiers secure a street during a raid that nabbed 15 terrorists in Sadr City.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Bryson K. Jones

Iraqi soldiers from 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Infantry Division conduct their daily patrol on the streets of Fallujah.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Bryson K. Jones

An Iraqi Lieutenant from 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Infantry Division helps an Iraqi child with his English during a patrol in Fallujah.