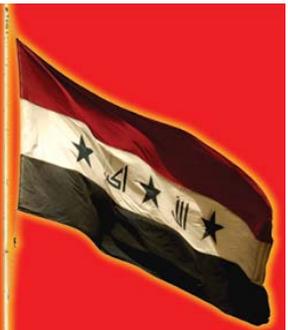




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



Vol. 2, No. 2

www.mnf-iraq.com

January 11, 2006

Top Stories



Polish troops donate supplies to students and farmers, Page 3

Paving roads in Sadr City, Page 7



Uncovering weapon caches, Page 10

Iraq's newest heroes, Page 12



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rick Rzepka

Soldiers from all over Iraq stand in formation in Baghdad during Army Day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Jan. 6.

Iraqi Soldiers united

Story by Spc. Rick Rzepka
This Week in Iraq, Assistant Editor

BAGHDAD — Soldiers representing Iraq's 10 Army Divisions stood proudly along with high-ranking officers and dignitaries Jan. 6 to commemorate Iraqi Army day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the International Zone here.

The event, organized by the Ministry of Defense, was the largest affair orchestrated here since the inception of the war, marking a milestone in the progress of Iraq's security forces and symbolizing the unity of Iraq's Army.

As Iraq's Minister of Defense Saadun al-

Dulaimi stood somberly before a battalion of sharply dressed Iraqi Soldiers, a wreath was placed at the centerpiece of the tomb marking 85 years since the beginning of the Iraqi Army.

"Today's festival has a special meaning and it is not like the previous ones. Today we serve the nation."

Saadun al-Dulaimi,
Iraq's Minister of Defense

Iraqi Army Soldiers are carrying on a proud tradition of military service and take pride in knowing they now serve the people

instead of a tyrannical despot.

The tomb also holds special meaning for the Soldiers.

"Today's festival has a special meaning and it is not like the previous ones," said

See **ARMY**, Page 4

Gen. Casey's Corner

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

The insurgency did not end because of the inspiring vote on Dec. 15. Recent suicide bombings and losses during combat operations remind us again that the fight is far from over. We cannot let isolated events distract us from the progress that has been made over the last year. That is what the terrorists want.



As a result of the operations to restore Iraqi control to the Syrian border over the past months, we have cut the number of suicide attacks in Iraq in half by denying the people, resources and safe havens necessary for sustained operations.

The enemy will do anything, to include killing innocent men, women and children to reach their goal of subjugating Iraq and making it a base of terror for the world. This is al-Qaida's stated goal and our mission is to ensure this does not happen. We cannot lose sight of our mission.

Foreign fighters are trying to foment sectarian tension during a vulnerable period, but will not bring Iraq to the brink of civil war. Clearly, recent attacks have been designed to take advantage of this vulnerable time during the formation of the government. However, we continually see that while there are a number of attacks, only 20-25

percent result in injury or damage. This stagnation over many months shows no increased capability by the terrorists and no increased support for their cause.

I think it is important for people to look at what the insurgents have not done. Certainly they can kill, and they have demonstrated that. However, murder is not a win-

ning strategy. They have failed to disrupt the political process. They have failed to disrupt the growth of the Iraqi military and police, which has grown and become better trained. And they have failed to hold terrain. They still offer no positive vision for the future of Iraq.

The future of Iraq can clearly be seen in the celebrations of Iraqi Army and Police Day in the last week. These celebrations serve to remind the world of the increasing confidence the Iraqi people place in their military and police to protect them, ensure democracy, freedom, and safety for all Iraqis. As the new Iraqi parliament is seated and ministries stand up, the Iraqi Security Forces will continue to be in the forefront, ensuring democracy and increasingly taking the lead from Coalition Forces in defeating terrorism.

Getting Paid

Iraqis bolster pay system with personnel graduates

Story by Lt. Col. Vann Mathis
Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq

TAJI — More than 130 Iraqi servicemembers graduated from the first pay and personnel accountability course at the Iraqi Army Service and Support Institute at Taji military base in late December.

The graduation of the servicemembers will aid in the management of the Iraqi Armed Forces pay system, which tracks the monthly payment of security forces members, according to course organizers. The course curriculum, developed by the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq personnel section, focused on the IAF pay system and how personnel accountability directly impacts the payment of monthly salaries.

Lesson plans and lectures focused on the structure and function of the military pay system and military personnel accountability policies and procedures.

The course was designed to give students who are responsible for pay and personnel at their units the proper procedures to maintain accurate personnel information, thereby improving the overall payroll system.

U.S. Navy Lt. Garth Gimmestad, who devised the curriculum for the course, has great expectations for the first course graduates.

"I am sure these students will positively impact their units with the knowledge they gained while in this class," he said.

Classroom participation was high during the course and open discussion between students and instructors on personnel issues occurred frequently during the session, according to course organizers.

"The students were very receptive to the training," said Staff Sgt. Fatimah Knox, course instructor. "I know they will be able to take this information back to their units to perform their duties even better."

The pay and accountability curriculum given in late December has been turned over to the Iraqi and Coalition faculty at IASSI and will be incorporated into a three-week personnel course for IAF personnel. These courses are slated to begin this month.

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

**Combined Press
Information Center Director**
Lt. Col. Barry A. Johnson
barry.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief
Capt. Bradford E. Leighton
bradford.leighton@iraq.centcom.mil



Editor.....Spc. David J. Claffey
david.claffey@iraq.centcom.mil
Assistant Editor.....Spc. Richard L. Rzepka
richard.rzepka@iraq.centcom.mil
Command Information NCOIC.....Sgt. Jeffrey M. Lowry
jeff.lowry@iraq.centcom.mil

This Week in Iraq is an authorized publication produced by Multi-National Force - Iraq. Contents are not the official views of the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is 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.

Polish troops renovate village school



Story and photo by Lt. Cmdr. Bartosz Zajda
Multi-National Division - Central South

AL BUDAYR — Three months ago, Polish Soldiers patrolling in al Budayr, 25 miles west of Ad Diwaniyah, found a school in poor condition.

The building looked like it was going to fall apart.

Work started in November to rebuild the small school, replacing the palm leaf roof with plaster. They built new rooms, installed new windows and doors and installed a power generator and water system.

Once the building was complete, the Soldiers moved in new tables, desks and blackboards, along with air conditioners. The renovation also expanded the school's 140-child capacity, with 250 students now able to attend classes.

A ceremony marked the re-opening, and ushered in a new era of learning for al Budayr stu-

Maj. Gen. Piotr Czerwinski, commanding general of Multi-National Division - Central South, hands toys and stuffed animals to children at the newly renovated al Budayr school. Polish Soldiers completed the project in about three months.



Polish Soldiers present donated plows to Iraqi farmers in the Diwaniyah Province.

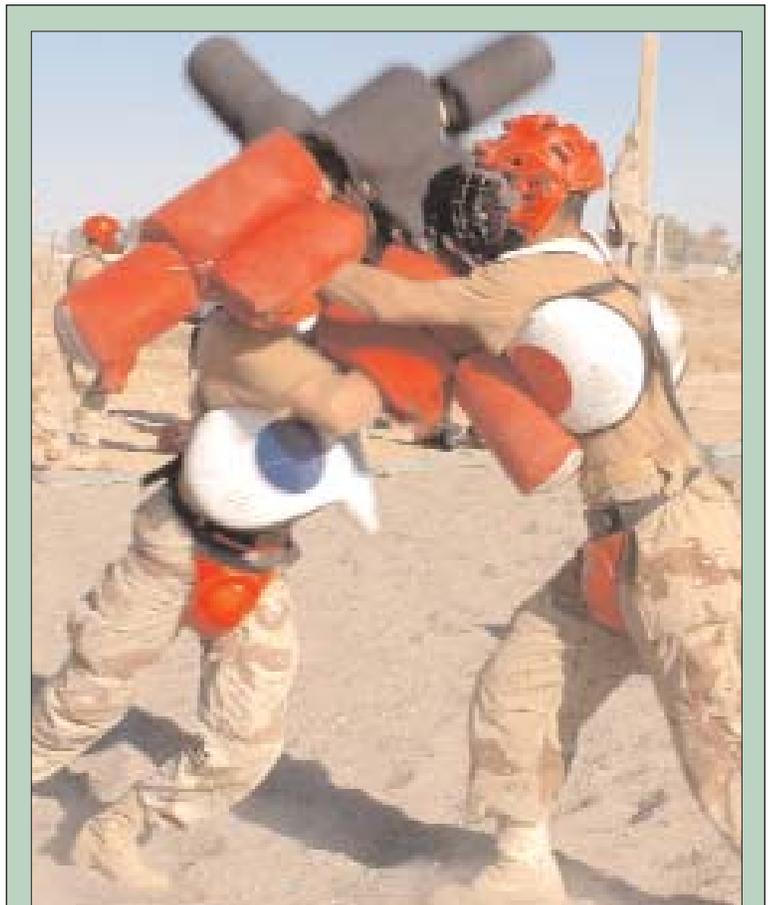
Helping farmers till the soil

Story and photo by Lt. Cmdr. Bartosz Zajda
Multi-National Division - Central South

AD DIWANIYAH — A new growing season is about to begin in the Diwaniyah Province and Polish Soldiers from Multi-National Division - Central South are helping Iraqi farmers get a jump on it.

Agriculture plays an important role in Iraq's economy. Many Iraqis make a living cultivating the arable lands of the Euphrates and Tigris river valleys.

Polish Soldiers donated more than 150 tons of seed, farming equipment and irrigation pumps to the Agriculture Association, which supports 3,500 families in the Diwaniyah Province.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ashly Rice

Iraqi Soldiers battle each other in the pugil pit during a basic training hand-to-hand combat course at Q-West Base.

ARMY

from page 1

Dulaimi. "Today we serve the nation and not the leader," he said, speaking of Saddam Hussein.

"It's the face of our country," said Ali, a Soldier with the special police force. "I am happy to be serving my country. If we do not protect our country, then who will protect it," he asked.

As dark clouds spanned the sky, Ali and hundreds of other Soldiers from various units sounded off with the Iraqi Armed Forces oath; a new mantra for the Army.

"I swear in the name of God and on my honor to protect the land of Iraq and its people from all aggression and to be loyal to the principles of the Constitution," they roared in unison.

The cohesion of the Iraqi Army, whose presence now is greater than ever, is apparent as they are taking on a larger role in keeping the citizenry safe from terrorists and fighting under one flag.

"There are Sunni, Shi'ite and Kurdish Soldiers here," said an Iraqi Soldier. "It makes no difference, we are one Army."

The Soldier said the strength and unity of the Army is better now than before and they have volunteered to protect all of the Iraqi people from terrorists.

"Nobody has forced us to be in the Army like before," he said. "We are like one hand, all of us are brothers."



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey
Flanked by military officials, Iraqi Minister of Defense Saadun al-Dulaimi pays his respects to fallen Soldiers in the country's past. Later, the minister spoke to hundreds of troops assembled for the Army.



Iraqi Soldiers stand at attention atop the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in front of the monument's minaret.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rick Rzepka



Soldiers scale the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier near Zarwa Park in Baghdad, site of Iraq's Army Day celebration in the capital city on Jan. 6.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey
Members of the Iraqi Army National Marching Band perform during Army Day on Jan. 6.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Orlando Claffey



Heroes of the Week

900 days and counting for Soldier

Story and photo by Spc. Spencer Case
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

AN NUMANIYAH — Just about every Soldier counts down the days until the end of a deployment.

Maj. David Motes also counts, but for him the number goes up instead of down each day. Motes is adding up all the days after Sept. 11 that he has been deployed. When he returns home from his third deployment in January, his count will be near 900.

On his current deployment, Motes helped local villagers in An Numaniyah get access to water and build a school.

“I’ve seen the good side of what goes on over here and I’ve also seen the bad side of what goes on,” said Motes. “Frankly, I’d prefer to try to focus my efforts towards the good side. That’s why I’ve been trying to help people with these water projects and the schools,” Motes said.

Motes was in guest housing on Fort Campbell, Ky., when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and Pentagon, having just returned from a year-long deployment in Korea. Within a few months, Motes was deployed again in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He returned to Fort Campbell in Aug. 2002, took command of 102nd Quartermaster Company, deploying again in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003. He was home for about a year before he was given orders to go to Iraq for another tour.

Motes is finishing his tour with the military training team responsible for advising and assisting the 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment of the Iraqi Army.

“The fact that I’ve been able to see the creation of the regiment from scratch has been a very rewarding experience,” Motes said.



Maj. David Motes is wrapping up his third deployment in five years and will eclipse 900 days deployed later this month.

Returning Soldier compares Iraq's Armies

Story by Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TAJI — Ali Hadhiam has seen both sides of Iraq’s Army, enlisted before the fall of Saddam and now with the new Iraqi Security Forces.

Hadhiam is a transportation warrant officer in the 1st Motorized Transportation Regiment in Taji. He has been in the new Iraqi army for a year now. Having prior military experience allowed him to get the rank of warrant officer in the newly established military.

“Before, it was safe to join the Army. It is not like that any more,” said Hadhiam. However the living conditions and pay are much better now. These are the major differences between the old and new systems, he said.

Someone who wants to be in the new Iraqi army has to be brave and has to have faith in the system, Hadhiam said.

He said he likes the freedom of thinking in the new army. He also enjoyed training with other nations. “They gave us a different idea, a different meaning of being a Soldier,” Hadhiam explained.

The U.S. troops taught us special tactics, for example what to do in case we are ambushed when we run our combat logistics patrols. “They also taught us when to shoot and when not to shoot,” he said.

He supports a family of 10 from his military income. His family lives in an area, where violence and shootings occur every day. “I didn’t even tell my neighbors that I am in the military, so my family is not in so much danger,” Hadhiam said.

As for why he is risking his life in such a dangerous occupation, he said, “I wanted to participate in securing my country.”

More than 28,000 residents of Mamoudiya have fresh, potable water with the installation of 8.6 miles of water pipes.

First Iraqi female graduates medic course

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell
Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq, Public Affairs Office

TAJI — Roughly five weeks ago, Iraqi Sgt. Zenasami arrived at the Iraqi Army Service and Support Institute ready to learn all she could about being a military medic.

When Iraqi officials noticed her gender, she was told to go back to her unit, the 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, based in Baghdad.

"She was the first female Soldier," said U.S. Air Force Capt. William Ingram, the Coalition officer-in-charge of the medical course. "They didn't know what to do with her. But she fought. She wouldn't go home, no matter how hard they pushed her."

Zenasami, 28, left this week with a certificate of completion in hand and a wrist watch, a gift presented by the institute's commandant, Iraqi Col. Wared, in recognition of her groundbreaking role in the course.

"It was very difficult at first. They weren't prepared for a woman to be here," Zenasami said. "I stayed because I have always wanted to know all about medical skills."

Coalition advisors and members of Zenasami's unit supported her desire to remain. Because the students live in open bay barracks, living accommodations posed the biggest roadblock. Eventually, officials found an empty room in the staff area.

In Baghdad, where she grew up, Zenasami works in her unit's medical clinic. She already knew how to give shots and start IVs, but the course taught her how to treat people in shock and administer CPR, among other skills. She and the 63 other students also participated in a mass-casualty exercise.

Now, she plans to go back to her unit and teach others what she knows. One of her course instructors believes she'll have plenty to pass on.

"She did great, she was one of the best students," said U.S. Army Sgt. Tony Bussing, who teaches the course along with U.S. Army Sgts. Jennifer Connolly and Ivan Ansbaugh. "She came in early, always sat in front, always asked questions. I'd take 100 students just like her any day."



Iraqi 1st Lt. Latifa congratulates Iraqi Sgt. Zenasami at her graduation from the Iraqi Army Service and Support Institute's medic course.

Zenasami joined the Iraqi Army nearly three years ago. She was a college student at the time, not quite sure what she wanted to do with her life.

"I saw how enthusiastic people were to apply to join the Army, without anyone forcing them," she recalled. "I decided this was what I wanted to do. I like the honor you get from wearing the uniform."

Zenasami and other Iraqi leaders believe it's important for more women to join the Army. Iraqi Lt. Col. Ibrahim, a surgeon for the 1st Army Iraqi Division, said that seeing women in military uniforms is unusual for most men and that some officers have reservations about women serving in the Army.

"It's new right now," Ibrahim said. "In the future it will be more common. We need more women, especially in the medical field. When a Soldier is injured and he sees a nurse, he sees her as an

angel of mercy. A woman can make a Soldier feel more relaxed."

Women are filling other roles in the Iraqi Army as well. A company of female military police officers is based at a former airfield in Baghdad. While Zenasami is the first female enlisted Soldier to attend the institute, Iraqi 1st Lt. Latifa earned recognition as the first woman to graduate from the officer logistics course about three months ago.

Latifa, who works in logistics at the Taji Military Base's basic training academy, was among the distinguished guests at the medical course Jan. 5 graduation. From one woman to another, Latifa congratulated Zenasami for her persistence. Zenasami views her accomplishment as the beginning of what she hopes will be a long career as an Iraqi Army medic.

"Doing this makes me feel like I'm an important person, people look forward to seeing me," she said. "I want to help save lives."

Iraqi police discover two car bombs in one night

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Police coordinated with Coalition Forces to foil two terrorist attempts to use vehicle-carried improvised explosive devices against Iraqi citizens on Jan 8.

While on patrol in western Rashid, police officers identified a suspicious vehicle and notified a Coalition Force patrol.

Shortly afterward, an explosive ord-

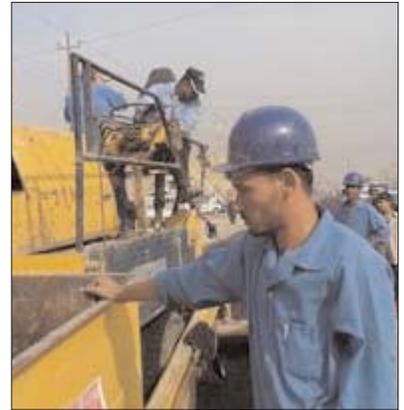
nance disposal team responded to the vehicle-carried improvised explosive device. The team conducted a controlled detonation of four 130 mm rounds and two 122 mm rounds in the vehicle.

Three hours later, Iraqi Police teamed up again with Coalition Soldiers after receiving a tip from an anonymous civilian. They identified another potential car bomb

in Saydiyah and called in an explosive ordnance team to disarm the bomb. The team extracted three 155 mm rounds and one 130 mm round.

The vehicle was later removed by the Iraqi Police. The Iraqi Security Forces, along with Task Force Baghdad Soldiers, were able to stop terrorists from harming innocent Iraqi civilians.

A new pumping station in Mansour has given 15,000 Iraqi families a more efficient system for the removal of waste.



This week in pictures:

Newly paved roadways in Sadr City

*Photos by Norris Jones
U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers, Central District Public Affairs Office*

Three streets in Sadr City are getting a face lift thanks to Lasim A Jasim, a local company hired to repair the sewer lines and repave the roadways. More than 40 Iraqis are taking part in the \$941,000 project which will convert Shaeed, Dakheel and Abu Thar streets from dirt roads to asphalt. Work began in October and should be complete by March.



More than 3.1 miles of electrical lines and a new substation will provide about 30,000 people living in Irbil with electricity.



Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces' Operations Review



Story by Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps - Iraq, Public Affairs Office

This week in Iraq, Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces detained 277 anti-Iraqi forces, found and cleared 152 improvised explosive devices and 81 weapons caches while carrying out nearly 200 combined operations.

In northern Iraq, Iraqi and Coalition forces captured terrorists, seized weapons and disrupted bombing plots thanks to the tips they have received from citizens in the region.

While many tips come from residents concerned with stopping the violence near their homes, an equally important source of information is generated through a robust rewards program.

Tips leading to weapons caches, related to improvised explosive devices or the capture of those involved in attacks against civilians or security forces all qualify for the program.

The highest reward, \$25 million, is offered for information leading to the cap-



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses Sr.
A Soldier from Co A., 2nd Bn., 22nd Inf. Reg., gives an Iraqi boy a high five during a medical mission in Almeshahama on Jan. 5.

ture of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, whose terrorist network is responsible for hundreds of civilian deaths.

Since the program started in late October, the numbers of payouts have dramatically increased. Payouts totaled seven in October, 70 in November and 123 in December. More than \$60,000 was paid last month for information helping to safeguard citizens, property and infrastructure.

The payout has paid off.

A local man near Bayji reported a cache of approximately 6,000 anti-aircraft artillery rounds on Jan. 4. The cache was transported to a nearby military base for disposal.

Soldiers from Task Force Band of Brothers also seized four more weapons caches and detained 11 suspected terrorists in northern Iraq that day.

Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, conducting a patrol near Hawija, detained eight suspects and destroyed a large collection of weapons and explosives on Jan. 4.

Three more suspects were taken into custody after another 1st BCT patrol near Hawija stopped their vehicle and discovered 30 pistols.

A fourth cache, containing 25 artillery rounds was discovered and taken to a base near Kirkuk for disposal.

On Jan. 7, three men suspected of participating in IED attacks were captured and a gunman was killed in three separate incidents.

Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, acting on a tip, staged two early morning raids near Forward Operating Base Summerall, southwest of Bayji. Two men wanted in connection with IED attacks against Iraqi



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Shane S. Keller
Marine Sgt. Christopher Ribbeck, from 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. Reg., climbs down a set of stairs in an Iraqi home after clearing the upstairs rooms.

and Coalition Forces were captured in their homes and are being detained.

A suspected IED triggerman was detained near Hawijah later in the morning after Soldiers from the 101st's 1st BCT noticed him acting suspiciously immediately after an IED detonated on their patrol.

A gunman was shot after conducting a drive-by shooting against a 3rd BCT patrol near Bayji. The man fired at the Soldiers as they were stopped to secure an IED site. None of the Soldiers were injured during the short engagement.

In Ramadi, 30 Iraqi men were killed after a suicide bomb exploded on Jan. 5 near the Ramadi Glass and Ceramics Works where screening for Iraqi Police was taking place.

Despite the attack, the applicants returned and continued the screening process.

Those candidates selected will attend 10 weeks of Basic Iraqi Police Training in Baghdad before returning to patrol Ramadi's streets.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Soldiers found and secured two improvised explosive devices during a cordon and search on Jan. 5.

The predawn operation was planned, staffed and conducted by the 2nd Battalion,

See *OPERATIONS*, next page

Reflecting on 2005

By Senior Airman Chris Powell
Multi-National Corps - Iraq, Public Affairs Office

As the last hours of 2005 ticked away, Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, the Multi-National Corps - Iraq Commanding General, talked about 2005 to servicemembers at the Al Faw Palace.

The general spoke on topics ranging from the Iraqi national election in January to the constitutional referendum in October and the recent trial of Saddam Hussein. He stressed it was servicemen and women who have made the war a success thus far, and it's their duty to give an honest assessment of the situation to citizens back home.

"The men and women at the point of the spear have done everything we could possibly asked of them," he said.

As the threat to Coalition Forces evolved during the tenure of the Corps, the Coalition changed its tactics to meet emerging threats.

"Our services have made an astonishing change to the force structure in terms of equipment and technology to address the [improvised explosive device] threat. In 2003, there were only about 240 [up-armored] vehicles worldwide. Now we have over 18,000 in theater."

The general also recognized the coalition's ability to sustain 13,000 logistical convoys, transporting millions of gallons of fuel all while traveling great distances over terrible terrain and also the abilities of the medical specialties operating within theater.

"Coalition Forces as well as our Iraqi counterparts have had the best medical care possible. The result is that we have the lowest died-of-wounds ratio in history," the general said.

But by fighting to do all these things, Coalition Forces paid a heavy price.

"Over 2,000 caskets have been loaded onto aircraft headed home. Many of the casualties have been borne by our Coalition members," he said. "There are many other sacrifices by family members, spouses, children and other loved ones.

Ultimately, it's not about anything other than young men and women who have the courage and commitment to execute their nation's will."

Although attacks aren't as high as previous years, the general said we still face an every-day danger. "The number of incidents is going down.

However, we cannot become complacent. When we see 50 attacks per day instead of 70, it still means 50 attacks against the Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces or Iraqi civilians."

While Coalition Forces have borne the brunt of the casualties, he acknowledged the ever-growing sacrifices made by the Iraqi Security Forces.

"There has been an enormous sacrifice among the ISF," Vines said. "They continue to take a greater role in the security of Iraq, and these forces are also taking an increasing percentage of the casualties."

Eighty percent of operations include the Iraqi Security Forces, and they have shown they are capable, the general said.

"It's good to have all these things happening - 112 battalions in the field, borders re-established, [Al-Qaeda in Iraq] in disarray and three national elections and referendums," he said. "There is no absolute guarantee it will succeed, because that depends on the type of government that will arise. It cannot be about sects or clans, but about Iraqis. Only a government for all Iraqis can succeed."

He concluded by saying, "I tell you this because I believe you owe your fellow citizens an honest appraisal - your own opinion. That's mine. I am proud of you and what you have done for your nation."



Lt. General John R. Vines addressing troops with Multinational Corps - Iraq on Dec. 31.

Operations

from previous page

1st Brigade, 9th Iraqi Mechanized Division and supported by Task Force Baghdad Soldiers.

In addition to the two IEDs, Iraqi Soldiers detained six people who may have been involved with roadside bombs or connected to other terrorist activities. Iraqi units in this sector are responsible for more than 80 square miles in northern Baghdad.

In separate operations, Coalition Forces in Baghdad seized two weapons caches Jan. 4, denying terrorists the opportunity to bring harm to Iraqi civilians and Coalition Forces.

While conducting a local presence patrol in south Baghdad, Soldiers discovered a weapons cache that included 34 155 mm artillery rounds, two 130 mm artillery rounds, two 82 mm mortar rounds, three 60 mm mortar rounds, three TJ7 kickout mortar rounds, 8,500 7.62 mm rounds, two rockets, one 30 mm mortar barrel and 100 feet of detonation cord. The patrolling Soldiers notified an explosive ordnance disposal unit, which performed the detonation.

Soldiers patrolling north of Baghdad discovered the second cache, which included 22 surface-to-air missiles.

MNF-I Operations

Summary: Dec. 31 to Jan. 6



Courtesy photo

**Combined operations: 199
IEDs found and cleared: 152
anti-Iraqi forces detained: 277
foreign fighters captured
or killed: 17
Weapons caches found
and cleared: 81**

**THIS WEEK IN
IRAQ Online**
www.mnf-iraq.com

Rakkasans and Iraqis uncover weapons cache

Story by Spc. William Jones
133rd Mobile Affairs Detachment

SALAH AH DIN PROVINCE — Soldiers in the Iraqi Army continue to play a greater role in seizing power once held by anti-Iraqi forces in an area northeast of Baghdad.

The 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army and the Rakkasans' Military Transition Team from 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, unearthed several weapons and munitions in a joint search of a farm in the city of Hawish on Jan. 4.

The Soldiers were dispatched to the area on a tip from a local resident. Once on the scene, two individuals were detained and made to unearth the weapons cache.

The search uncovered several artillery rounds, land mines and rocket-propelled grenades. U.S. Army explosive experts were called to the scene to supervise the destruction of the cache.

The Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion began their training early last year and have been working with 101st Airborne Division's Rakkasans since their arrival last fall. The Iraqi Soldiers' duties are manning security checkpoints near major cities and providing quick reaction forces as needed. The goal of the MiTT is to aid the Iraqis as they begin to

assume more security responsibilities.

"The Iraqi Soldiers continue to show their professionalism and have come a long way in a relatively short period of time," said 1st Lt. Matthew Upperman, a member of the MiTT team.

A weapons cache is shown unearthed in a farmer's field prior to its destruction by the Rakkasans' Military Transition Team in Samarra on Jan. 3.



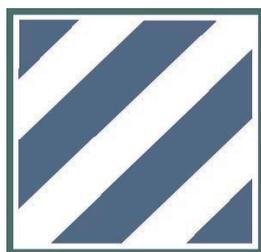
U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Upperman

A Soldier from the Rakkasans' Military Transition Team examines a tank round unearthed from a farmer's field near Samarra on Jan. 3.

3rd ID ends second tour; welcomes Ironhorse to Iraq

BAGHDAD — As Iraqi Army and Coalition partners looked on, the 3rd and 4th Infantry Divisions commemorated the completion of their "Transfer of Authority" during a ceremony at the Multi-National Division-Baghdad headquarters on Jan. 7.

Maj. Gen. William Webster Jr., the commanding general of 3rd Inf. Div., along with Command Sgt. Maj. William Grant, officially cased the 3rd ID's "Marne" Division colors, after successfully completing the division's mission as the Multi-National Division-Baghdad from Feb. 28 through Jan. 7. The division colors will again be uncased during a ceremony after its redeployment back to Fort Stewart, Ga.



Maj. Gen. J.D. Thurman, the commanding general of 4th Inf. Div., along with Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling, uncased the "Ironhorse" Division's colors, signifying the division assuming the mantle of responsibility as Multi-

National Division-Baghdad. The division cased its colors before deploying from Fort Hood, Texas, during a ceremony Oct. 28.

Lt. Gen. John Vines, the commanding general of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, served as the reviewing officer for the ceremony



"This ceremony symbolizes the transfer of authority," said Vines. "There's another symbolism of course - the Soldiers who serve under those colors are conducting operations throughout the Multi-National Division-Baghdad sector."

Baghdad is the most complex environment in the world, he said, as it steadily moves toward democracy. The two divisions have served brilliantly in the Iraqi theater, he added

"The 3rd Infantry Division is the first U.S. division to serve two complete tours in Iraq," he said. "No unit in the United States Army has been busier, more deployed or has seen as much combat as the 3rd Infantry Division."

Rebuilding Iraq

Projects that are shaping a nation

BAGHDAD - Three solid waste transfer stations have been built in Baghdad, two in Nissan and one in Sadr City. Each site provides a central location for garbage collection.

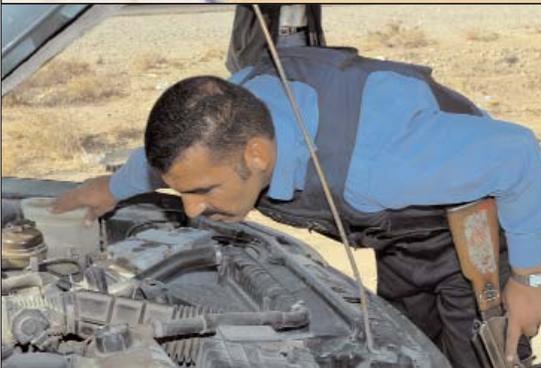


MAHAWIL - Repairs to the electrical distribution network in Mahawil have provided 50,000 people with reliable power.



BASRAH - Two roads have been repaved in Taha and Al Khas, 5.7 miles combined. The project will help 6,000 residents travel, and provide access to a school and water treatment plant.

AL MUTHANNA PROVINCE - Six checkpoints have been renovated in Rumaytha, Samawah and Kidr in the Al Muthanna Province. They will help with security and controlling traffic flow to the towns.



BASRAH - Two units have been installed at the Khor Az Zubayr power plant in Basrah, adding 250 megawatts to the national electric grid.

ABU SKHEER - About 10,000 people in Abu Skheer have been connected to fresh water with the installation of a 1.2 mile water distribution mainline.

Iraq's newest heroes

Iraqis on the hunt for a stable country

Photos can be found on www.mnf-iraq.com

Dr. Abd Ali, from the Iraqi Army's 3rd Bde. Medical Company, checks a boy during a medical mission in Almeshahama.

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses Sr.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Michael R. McMaugh
An Iraqi Soldier explains to a woman why her house is being searched during Operation Red Bull.



An Iraqi policeman searches a field during sweeps in the Zafaraniya district of Baghdad on Dec. 29. The sweeps are conducted to search for weapons and items used in the making of IED's.

U.S. Army photo by Pfc. William Servinski II



Iraqi Army Soldiers enter a house to search for any weapon and ammunition caches that may be hidden in Haditha.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Michael R. McMaugh