



IRON STRONG DAILY

PAGE 1

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Cav Soldiers hunt for insurgents

**Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Doheny
1st BCT, 101st Airborne Div.**

In 2006 the city of Balad was a melting pot for sectarian violence.

Today, it is an example of security and economic progress.

This progress is a direct reflection of 12 months of successful Coalition and Iraqi operations which have placed a clamp on major insurgent activities in and around the predominately Shia city.

With the organization of Sons of Iraq groups or “Sawha”, and the ever increasing capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces, criminal activity in the once restive city has decreased dramatically.

Also playing a major factor is the successful targeting of insurgent cell leaders and weapons facilitators operating in the area, by the Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

All three elements partnered to rid the area of the majority of illegal activity, setting the stage for mass reconciliation and a growing economic atmosphere.

Even with the overall successes in the Balad Qada, the Cavalry Soldiers are still actively pursuing the enemy. Operations aimed at maintaining a secure atmosphere in the Qada are still a priority to the squadron.

In an effort to continue the positive trend, Soldiers from Bravo Troop and members

from the National Police’s Justice Battalion, conducted Operation Abbeville.

Abbeville was an air assault operation targeting Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) facilitators in the village of Darwish.

Shortly after completing the infiltration

See **Cav Soldiers** on Page 3



An OH-58 Kiowa Warrior flies overhead as Soldiers from Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry prepare to move to extraction locations during Operation Abbeville in Darwish Village near Balad, Iraq.

Kirkuk Police Academy graduates 3,000 IPs

**Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Margaret C. Nelson
1st BCT, 10th Mountain Division**

More than three thousand Iraqis including 58 females joined the ranks of the Kirkuk province's police force during a graduation ceremony held at the Kirkuk Police Academy, Sept. 23.

"This is a historic event for the people of the Kirkuk province," Maj. Gen. Jamal Thaker Baker, the Kirkuk provincial police chief said. He was referring to the unprecedented number of male and female recruits graduating. "This is the direct result of the combined efforts of our Coalition friends and the Ministry of the Interior."

The provincial police chief elaborated further by pointing out key Multi-National Division North military leadership in the audience to include; Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, commanding general of MND-North and Task Force Iron; Brig. Gen. James C. Boozer, Sr.,

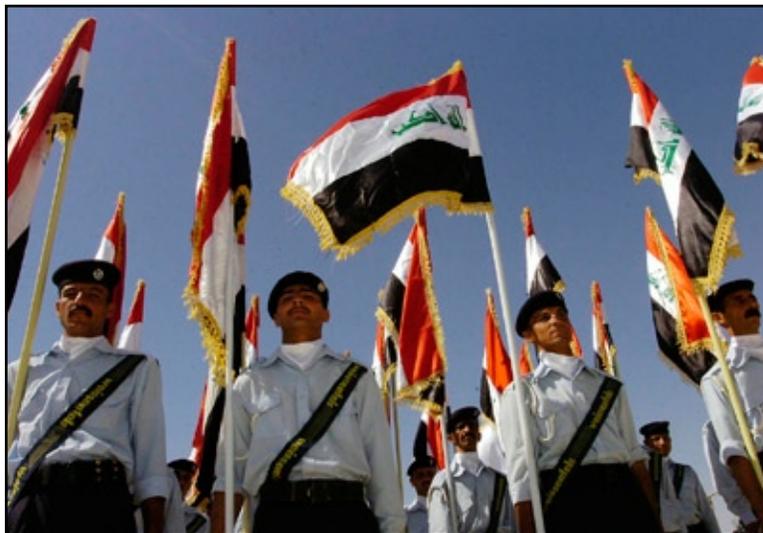


Kirkuk Police Academy Recruits pass-in-review in front of their Provincial Police Chief Jamal Thaker Baker during a graduation ceremony. More than 3,000 Iraqis, including 58 female, will join the Iraqi Police ranks throughout the Kirkuk Province in northeastern Iraq.

deputy commanding general-operations MND-North and Task Force Iron; Brig. Gen. Tony Thomas, assistant division commander-support MND-North and Task Force Iron; and Col. David Paschal, commander, 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, who Jamal said he considers among a brotherhood.

He credited the recent gains in security throughout the province to this brotherhood whose main concern is for the people of the Kirkuk province and providing "security and stability in this region for them." Jamal thanked God for the additional men and the inclusion of women to his police force.

Brig. Gen. Kawa Garib Abdul-Rahman, commandant of the academy, said in closing that the sacrifices of the police force's martyrs would never be forgotten and their dedication to maintaining peace and security to the people of the Kirkuk province would continue through the efforts of those men and women graduating.



A Kirkuk Police Academy honor guard prepares to pass-in-review during a graduation ceremony. An unprecedented class, numbering more than 3,000 including 58 females, will fill positions through-out the Kirkuk Province in northeastern Iraq.

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling
Public Affairs Officer: Maj. Margaret Kageleiry
Public Affairs NCOIC: Master Sgt. Nancy Morrison

Contributing Writers: Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Doheny,
Staff Sgt. Margaret C. Nelson
Layout and Design: Spc. Karla P. Elliott, 14th PAD
Editor: Staff Sgt. Mark Albright, 14th Public Affairs Detachment

Contact the *Iron Strong* at VOIP: 242-1190, DSN: 318-849-0089 or email mark.albright@iraq.centcom.mil

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Cav Soldiers from Page 1



Captain Tony Keller, commander of Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment, relays a message via tactical radio as he looks at a map during Operation Abbeville in Darwish Village near Balad, Iraq.

via UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, the joint force swiftly moved to secure each of their multiple target buildings leading to the capture of their pre-operation target.

“This operation confirmed reporting that the people of the village were intimidated into providing sanctuary to AQI members,” said Capt. Tony Keller, Bravo Troop commander. “Hopefully the intelligence we received from this operation will allow us to develop future operations targeting these AQI elements.”

According to the squadron, the operation was more than just a show of force; however, it does demonstrate to the enemy that they are still being targeted.

“The enemy must be aware that Coalition and Iraqi forces will not stop pursuing them,” said Maj. Jason Tussey, squadron operations officer.

“We retain the ability to strike at a time and place of our choice.”

The result of the operation was the detention of five individuals from the village and the removal of miscellaneous weapon systems.

The village of Darwish is a rural area east of Balad, and Coalition and Iraqi forces rarely patrol the area. This has allowed AQI to frequently use the village as a place of safe haven from the pressures of Coalition and Iraqi operations.

“It is of utmost importance that the people of the village were able to see that their National Police can provide security for them,” Tussey said. “As we continue to operate in the rural areas where CF and ISF have not been before, people see that they are not forgotten and the Iraqi Government is working to provide much needed assistance.”

Once the initial “shock” factor of the air assault was

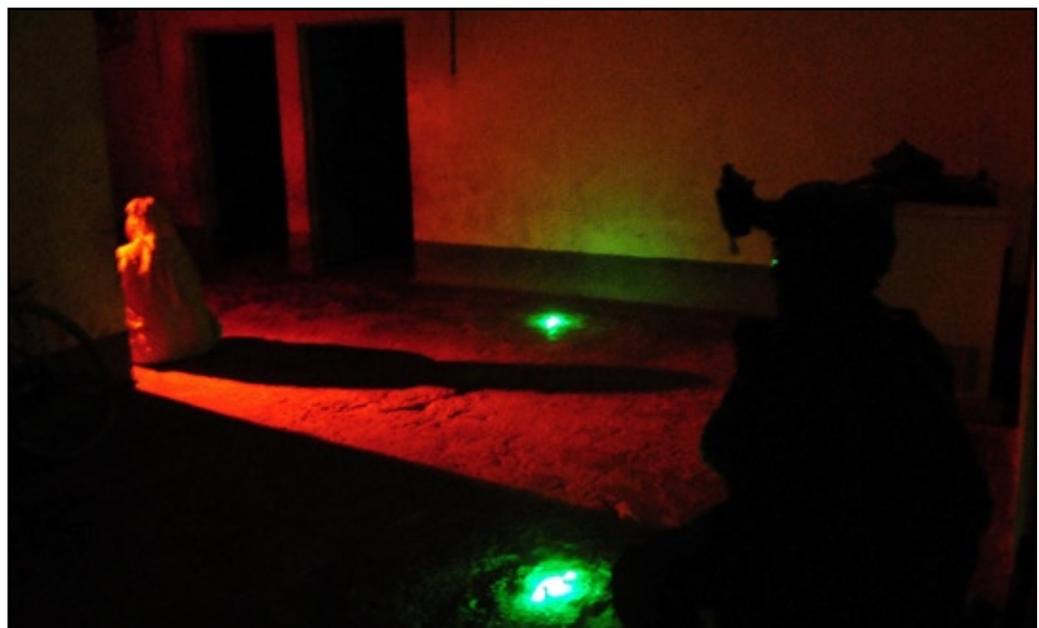
over and potential detainees had been identified, the Blackhorse Soldiers began to assist the other people in the village. Some of the villagers asked for medical attention, while others bottled water.

According to Keller, it is how his Soldiers conduct themselves after the enemy threat is eliminated that makes the largest impact.

“Any Soldier can conduct an air assault and we will always have superior combat power,” said Keller, “but to the local it is what we do after the ‘shock’ factor that can ultimately influence the operation.”

Keller said that the enemy no longer has this location as a place of sanctuary. He says that population there is tired of AQI disrupting the village.

“The majority of the population in our area of operations wants essential services,” Keller said. “It is the minority that supports the enemy that is our focus.”



A Soldier from Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment pulls security as a man from Darwish Village is asked questions about facilitating Al Qaeda members in Iraq inside the village during Operation Abbeville, near Balad.

HEALTH

(Reuters) U.S. health insurance premiums rose 5 percent on average this year and more companies shifted an additional share of the cost to workers, an annual survey of businesses said on Wednesday.

The average premium for a family's health insurance provided by an employer rose to \$12,680. Employees paid \$3,354 of that cost on average, according to the survey by the nonprofit Kaiser Family Foundation and the Health Research & Educational Trust.

The 5 percent increase was similar to the previous year's rise and was lower than other annual gains. Still, premiums have more than doubled since 1999 while workers' wages grew 34 percent, researchers said.

Sixty-three percent of employers offered health benefits in 2008, similar to the 2007 rate.

More insured workers, however, paid higher deductibles this year as companies struggled with rising costs and put more of the burden on employees. Eighteen percent had a deductible of at least \$1,000, up from 12 percent the previous year.

"Health insurance is steadily becoming less comprehensive," Kaiser President and Chief Executive Drew Altman said.

The growth in high-deductible plans mainly came from small businesses with fewer than 200 employees, the survey said. More than a third of those workers had to pay at least \$1,000 out of pocket before their insurance generally kicked in.

New high-deductible plans have been touted as a way to curb a steady rise in health-care costs. They are often labeled "consumer-directed" because patients have more control over spending, but tend to bear more costs with higher deductibles.

The findings were based on polls of more than 2,000 randomly selected companies between January and May 2008. Results were published in the journal *Health Affairs*.

FLORIDA

(AP) A teenager who mental health experts say wanted to become a serial killer was convicted Wednesday of luring his 14-year-old friend to a middle school bathroom and stabbing him to death in 2004.

A jury deliberated for about 3 1/2 hours before convicting Michael Hernandez, now 18, of first-degree murder in the slaying and of the attempted murder of another classmate.

The defense argued Hernandez was insane and not criminally responsible for luring Jaime Gough into the bathroom at Miami's Southwood Middle School, then slitting his throat and stabbing him at least 42 times.

But prosecutors said he was a smart student who wore a windbreaker and latex gloves for the attack in an effort to keep blood off his clothes.

When the verdict was read, Hernandez showed no reaction but was nervously moving his foot under the defense table.

His mother, Kathy, held her head in her hands and openly wept when she heard the guilty verdict. She left the courtroom without talking to reporters.

The parents of the victim, Jorge and Maria Gough, cried and hugged one another.



"He was guilty from day one," Jorge Gough said. "It's a closure. That's what we wanted to do for four years. It's been a long, long four years. But finally it's over."

Hernandez faces life in prison. The trial was moved to Orlando because of the wide publicity of the case, but his sentencing was scheduled for Nov. 7 in Miami.

Rosenbaum said he plans to appeal.

"Just because Michael was 14 years old and mentally ill, doesn't mean he should be stuck in a jail for the rest of his life," Rosenbaum said. "We always thought he should go to a mental hospital for a long time, maybe forever."

During closing statements earlier in the day, Rosenbaum said his client dramatically changed from being a happy kid in the summer following seventh grade.

"At the end of seventh grade, his life was spiraling out of control," Rosenbaum told the jury. "He was going crazy. He was losing it."

Assistant Miami-Dade State Attorney Carin Kahgan said Hernandez lied to his teacher and police about blood on his clothes, and eventually confessed to the crime after student witnesses placed him in the bathroom that morning and police found a bloody knife and glove in his backpack.

"Every one of those marks to Jaime's body speak out to you that the defendant intended to kill him," Kahgan said. "Stupid mistakes don't make a person legally insane."

Two defense mental health experts said Hernandez was a paranoid schizophrenic. And a third defense expert said he was delusional. All three said he was obsessed with becoming a serial killer and met the legal definition of insanity.

A prosecution psychiatrist, however, said although Hernandez had a personality disorder and had mental problems, he was able to function normally and made a "career choice" to be a killer.

Hernandez then began visiting psychology web sites to investigate his own behavior, and decided he was schizophrenic and had obsessive compulsive disorder. Rosenbaum said his client then made a "disturbing, irrational, crazy leap" that he "must be a serial killer."

BASEBALL

(AP) With another brutal loss, the New York Mets kept tumbling toward another September collapse. Derrek Lee blooped a go-ahead double in the 10th inning off Luis Ayala, Aramis Ramirez followed with a two-run homer and the Chicago Cubs rallied from a four-run deficit to defeat the Mets 9-6 Wednesday night.

New York, which wasted Carlos Delgado's third-inning grand slam off Carlos Zambrano and a 5-1 lead, dropped into a tie with Milwaukee for the NL wild-card lead and remained 1 1/2 games behind NL East-leading Philadelphia. The Mets, who have four games remaining, failed to win after taking a four-run lead for the eighth time this season, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Last year, the Mets imploded in one of baseball's greatest folds, failing to make the playoffs after leading their division by seven games with 17 to play. They lost to Florida on the final day to finish the collapse — at this rate, they won't even be in it by the time they finish against the Marlins on Sunday.

It's hard to conceive of a more demoralizing defeat. Many in the booing crowd of 54,416 quickly filed out following Ramirez's homer.

New York starter Oliver Perez was chased after 4 1-3 innings and 105 pitches. The Cubs tied the score 5-5 off Duaner Sanchez, with the help of an error by left fielder Daniel Murphy, then went ahead on Alfonso Soriano's RBI double in the seventh against Brian Stokes.

New York stranded seven runners in the seventh through ninth innings. The Mets failed to score after putting runners at the corners with no outs in the seventh, then got only one run — on Jeff Samardzija's bases-loaded walk to Ramon Martinez — after putting runners at the corners with no outs in the eighth.

Murphy tripled against Bob Howry (7-4) leading off the ninth, but the Mets' offense fizzled again. David Wright struck out and, after intentional walks to Delgado and Carlos Beltran, Ryan Church grounded to second baseman Ronny Cedeno, who was playing in and threw home for the forceout. Ramon Castro struck out meekly.

Ryan Theriot singled with two outs in the 10th off Ayala (2-10) and stole second. Lee then dumped a double

down the right-field line to bring up Ramirez.

Kerry Wood pitched the 10th for his 34th save in 40 chances, giving the Cubs 96 wins for the first time since 1984.

Since pitching a no-hitter against Houston on Sept. 14 in his return from a sore rotator cuff, Zambrano has allowed 13 runs, nine hits and seven walks in six innings. He muttered and glared at plate umpire Jim Wolf in the third inning after his 3-2 pitch to Wright with the bases loaded was called low and outside.

Given a 1-0 lead on Mark DeRosa's second-inning homer, Zambrano lost his control and composure in the third, when New York loaded the bases on a single and a pair of two-out walks. Wright walked on the ninth pitch of his at-bat and Delgado sent a high 3-2 pitch over the left-field wall for his second slam this season and the 13th of his career. Following a dismal start, Delgado has 27 homers and 79 RBIs since June 27.

Perez, 1-0 with seven no-decisions since Aug. 14, gave up a two-run double to DeRosa in the fifth. Sanchez relieved and allowed an RBI single to Reed Johnson. When Murphy overran the ball for an error, pinch-runner Kosuke Fukudome came home with the tying run.

FOOTBALL

WEEK THREE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2008

FINAL	1	2	3	4	SCORE
KANSAS CITY	0	7	7	0	14
ATLANTA<<	14	10	7	7	38
OAKLAND	6	3	7	7	23
BUFFALO<<	0	7	0	17	24
TAMPA BAY<<	7	7	0	10	OT 3/27
CHICAGO	6	3	8	7	OT 0/24
CAROLINA	3	7	0	0	10
MINNESOTA<<	0	10	7	3	20
MIAMI<<	7	14	7	10	38
NEW ENGLAND	0	6	7	0	13
CINCINNATI	3	10	0	10	OT 0/23
NY GIANTS<<	0	10	3	10	OT 3/26
HOUSTON	6	6	0	0	12
TENNESSEE<<	7	14	3	7	31
ARIZONA	0	7	10	0	17
WASHINGTON<<	7	3	7	7	24
NEW ORLEANS	3	16	7	6	32
DENVER<<	14	10	10	0	34
DETROIT	0	3	3	7	13
SAN FRANCISCO<<	7	14	0	10	31
ST. LOUIS	0	6	7	0	13
SEATTLE<<	17	10	0	10	37
CLEVELAND	0	10	0	0	10
BALTIMORE<<	0	7	21	0	28
JACKSONVILLE<<	0	10	7	6	23
INDIANAPOLIS	7	7	0	7	21
PITTSBURGH	3	3	0	0	6
PHILADELPHIA<<	0	10	0	5	15
DALLAS<<	3	10	7	7	27
GREEN BAY	3	3	3	7	16

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2008

FINAL	1	2	3	4	SCORE
NY JETS	7	7	0	15	29
SAN DIEGO<<	10	21	7	10	48

Scoreboard info from statesman.com



ITALY



(AFP) A glimmer of hope was in the air for distressed Italian airline Alitalia early on Thursday when the government was to hold talks with trades unions.

The last-minute talks were scheduled as a cost-cutting deadline ran out in the latest stage of efforts to rescue the carrier.

Transport minister Altero Matteoli spoke on Wednesday of a "ray of hope" for Alitalia and an official statement said that unions at the airline had been called to a meeting scheduled for 0900 GMT on Thursday.

Opposition leader Walter Veltroni said on television on Wednesday that he was "optimistic" that the crisis shaking Alitalia could be resolved.

Alitalia, 49.9 percent state owned, is facing bankruptcy, haemorrhaging about three million euros a day, with a debt of about 1.2 billion euros (1.7 billion dollars).

The airline's special administrator, Augusto Fantozzi, was due on Thursday to present a cost-cutting plan to Italy's civil aviation authority, ENAC, that calls for a reduction in the number of flights.

The company has been looking for a buyer for months. Investors grouped in the CAI, the Italian Air Company, called off takeover talks on September 18 after six of the nine unions rejected their restructuring plan for the airline.

AUSTRALIA

(AFP) Four hundred sheep died in a road accident in Australia, prompting animal rights activists on Tuesday to repeat their call for an end to the long distance transportation of livestock for slaughter.

Some 300 sheep died when the two-tier truck carrying them overturned in wet conditions near Corowa, about 500 kilometres (310 miles) southwest of Sydney late on Monday, New South Wales police said.

A further 100 were injured and had to be put down while 50 sheep survived.

"The vehicle veered onto the gravel verge in heavy rain and the driver lost control," police said in a statement, adding that the driver and

his 10-year-old son had been taken to hospital with various injuries.

Animal protection group Handle with Care said the accident was "a terrible reminder of the risks inherent in transporting animals".

"Minimising the distance animals need to travel on the road reduces the risks to their welfare," said Hugh Wirth, spokesman for umbrella group which includes the World Society for the Protection of Animals, RSPCA UK and Compassion in World Farming.

Handle with Care, which has called for an end to the live export of sheep to the Middle East, said all animal transport journeys should be as short as possible.

"Where animals need to be transported we must ensure that these



journeys are kept to a minimum," Wirth said in a statement.

EGYPT



(AFP) Archaeologists have found the bust of pharaoh Ramses II in Egypt's

Nile Delta, Culture Minister Faruq Hosni said Wednesday, bringing experts closer to finding a temple belonging to the king.

The red granite bust, which formed part of a colossal statue of the king, was found during routine excavations in the Tell Basta area, 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Cairo in the Nile Delta, Hosni said in a statement.

"The head is 76 cm high (around 30 inches), the nose is broken, and the false beard that was once attached to the king's chin is missing," antiquities supremo Zahi Hawass said.

"The discovery is important because it may indicate that the

excavators are close to the ruins of a major temple of Ramses II in the area," Hawass said.

Tell Basta is going through a major development plan, according to Egyptian officials, who say that a museum and a visitor's centre are currently under construction in the area.

Ramses II reigned over Egypt for about 68 years, from 1304 to 1237 BC, and is believed to have lived to the age of 90.

He covered the country with monuments to his exploits. His mummy, on display in Cairo's National Museum, is one of the country's biggest tourist attractions.