The Namsadang Troupe from Korea held a lively two-hour performance for the Zaytun troops and local guests on June 13. In attendance were Ministers of Culture and Education from the KRG, forty professors and students from the Salahaddin University, and other various regional officials.

The performance opened with gilnori, an act that announces the beginning of the performance. It was followed by an exciting tightrope walking performance, a various drum performance, and sal-poo-ri, exciting mixture of various traditional instruments.

During the breaks, the Zaytun troop club teams Woon-wo-poong-rae and Pink Panther added to the excitement. The troops also cheered for the Korean national team, participating in 2006 World Cup, with the local guests joining in shouting Dae-han-min-gook, O-pil-seung Korea and other slogans.

The exciting traditional performance from the Namsadang Troupe was an event that brought a taste of faraway home to the troops, and also a respite from their long deployment.

Falak Addin Kakai, the KRG Minister of Culture, said after the performance that he is very grateful for the Zaytun division held yet another chance for a mutual cultural exchange for the Kurdish people.

"Experiencing the Korean traditional music today gave me a chance to better understand both Korea and the Zaytun," he said.
A Letter from Fawzia Husein Aziz

"Tears blur my vision with the fact that I must say good bye to my friends, the Zaytun troops. You all did splendid jobs here in Irbil and we remain truly grateful."  

Fawzia Husein Aziz, the Principal of Husarek Elementary School, sent a letter at the end of March to the troops of the 11th Brigade, who are going back to Korea.

On her letter, she said she was very impressed with the brigade's work in building clinics, town halls, athletic fields, and other facilities, which she said changed her perspective of the military as a whole.

"The Korean troops were not the messengers of murder and destruction that I thought all military was alike," she noted on her letter. "They gave their hearts to bring peace and reconstruction to us, with respect to our culture and tradition. They truly gave us a dream and a hope for a better future."

She said she was most impressed with the troops truly caring about their work even in the most adverse conditions.

"The Kurdish people will always remember the Zaytun troops as our brothers and sisters," she said. "They planted the seed of trust and love in our heart."

The Kurdish people, a victim of much oppression throughout the history, are said to have a rather closed culture. However, Principal Aziz's letter showed than the Kurdish people truly opened up to the Korean troops.

She closed her letter saying that the Kurdish people would remember the Zaytun for the rest of their lives and tell their children and grandchildren about the work the Zaytun did for the Kurdish people.

"We all hope and pray that we shall meet again, whether here in Kurdistan or in Korea."

Thank you Zaytun!

In the name of 'Zaytun'

The namsadang performances were a big hit in the period during which entertainment was hard to find. Because of their outcast status, the performers formed close alliance with Buddhist temples around the country, often using them as their assembly points. Various namsadang troupes performed actively around the country.

As a form of entertainment for and by thelower classes, namsadang provides a valuable insight to how they looked at the late Joseon period and its upper classes. Currently, namsadang is considered as the origin of the modern folk culture, and was designated as an important intangible cultural asset by the Ministry of Culture.

Nam-sa-dang

In late Joseon period, namsadangs were wandering troupes of entertainers from the lower classes. Its origin is largely unknown; historical records are few, and even those were written for and by the ruling class, who looked at namsadang as a group behind many immoral acts.

Namsadang at first was an exclusively female group of performers who danced and sang at festivals around the country, but it eventually became an exclusively male group. The prefix nam means male, was added to change its name from sadang to namsadang.

The namsadang performances were made up of the lowest classes in the old Korean caste system, but their performance was a big hit in the period during which entertainment was hard to find. Because of their outcast status, the performers formed close alliance with Buddhist temples around the country, often using them as their assembly points. Various namsadang troupes performed actively around the country.

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Soldiers of the Zaytun Division will do their best to remain in your hearts as an everlasting friend and a symbol of hope, and we will honor our words in the name of 'Zaytun'.

Thank you Zaytun!

Principal Aziz's letter to the 11th Brigade of the Zaytun Division appeared in Weekly Dong-a, a Korean weekly magazine.

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Zaytun Campaign

In this era of information, the performance and the name of Zaytun are blossoming to flower of peace and reconstruction in Iraq.

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Thank you Zaytun!
An unforgettable festival to celebrate Korea and Kurdish cultures and their friendship was held by the 11th brigade on March 22. The event was attended by the Zaytun Commanding General Hwang and 700 Zaytun troops, the Iraqi Army 1st Brigade Commander, the KRG Minister of Culture and Education, the Regional Police Chief, the Zerbari Commander, and other local guests that numbered 200.

During the event, a play about the Turkish contingent to the United Nations Force that fought during the Korean War was especially warmly received by the audience. The play noted the fact that 70% of the Turkish troop was made up of the Kurdish people, and showed the historic spirit of cooperation between the two cultures. At the part where Kurdish and Kurdish soldiers celebrate a victory after a battle by singing military songs, the audience added to the drama by joining in.

Before the play, twenty students from various villages received the Division’s scholarship. The scholarship fund included $600 from the soldiers from Communication Support Company, 11th Brigade, who donated their Isplace prize money from the Zaytun Division Movie Festival to the local children.

The World Cup Brings Us Together

His team was about to play its second match of the 2006 World Cup after beating Togo, and Safin Kanahi, the President of Iraqi Kurdistan Football Association, could hardly contain his excitement. He and 500 Irbil residents, who had gathered in the Brusk Park at late hour of June 18, were there to cheer for the Korean national team versus France.

After the Korean team beat Togo in its first match, old and young, male and female football-loving residents of Irbil caught on the World Cup fever. To cheer for Korea, they have turned out in force well into the night, and watched the game from a huge screen. Waving the Korean flag that were provided by the Zaytun Division, they shouted Dad-han-min-geook and other famous Korean slogans.

Soldiers from the Zaytun could not join the residents due to the late hour, but joined them in spirit, watching the game inside the base and cheering for their national team.
360 Zaytun Division troops held a cultural exhibition event at the Salahaddin University on March 28 to demonstrate the Korean culture to the local residents. The event was held at the request from Mohammad Sadik, the President of the Salahaddin University, and was attended by 2,000 students and the members of the faculty, and the KRG Ministers of Education and Sports.

The Zaytun Division has held many such events in various villages, but this was the first time such an event was held at a university. Through this event, the division hopes there would be a wider sense of understanding of the Korean culture, and the work the division has been carrying out, among the region’s brightest students.

This event was held after faculty members and students from the Linguistic and the Humanities Departments of Salahaddin University paid a visit to the 11th brigade on March 20 for an invitational event, and watched the troop’s martial arts and sa-mool-no-ri performance. The visitors were very impressed, and asked the brigade to hold an event at the university for a bigger audience to showcase the Korean culture and demonstrate the work the Zaytun has been carrying out for the development of the region.

The Zaytun Division has been carrying out, among other things, cultural exhibition events at the facilities of the 11th and 12th brigades. The division hopes there would be a wider sense of understanding of the Korean culture, and the work the division has been carrying out, among the region’s brightest students.

"Koreans are always there to help us. They provided us with everything we asked for. They are so kind and helpful. We are very grateful." said Mohammad Sadik, the President of the Salahaddin University.

"We had so much fun. I hope every day is a Children’s Day," the children said, thanking the Zaytun Division for holding the event. "Koreans are always there to help us with smile on their faces, and we hope they would be here forever." said the children.

To commemorate the Children’s Day, the 12th brigade of the Zaytun Division held an event on March 31 for 220 students and faculty members from villages the brigade has held civil military operation, orphans and their support organization, and KRG, the university, and KRG, the division. The division hopes there would be a wider sense of understanding of the Korean culture, and the work the division has been carrying out, among the region’s brightest students.

The event was held with the goal of bringing hope and dream to the local children, and showcasing the division’s various activities to improve Korea’s image among them. The children took part in the photograph session, tour of the division’s facilities and equipment, tour of the Vocational Training Center, and the sports event with the Zaytun troops.

The visitors were very impressed with the high-tech military equipment, and could see their capabilities firsthand during demonstrations. At the Vocational Training Center, they could see the example of Division’s ‘Respect and Demonstration’ motto, at the facilities for various courses that the Center holds.

The tour was followed by the Honor Guard and Taekwondo performances, and music from the Military Band. The children then took part in the sports event, at which they could have a great fun playing a two-person–three-leg sprint, a tug-of-war and other events. A photograph session was held also alongside the sports event, which was warmly received by the visitors.

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