

THE Dog Face Daily

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Serving Task Force Marne



Photos by Sgt. Marcus Butler

New Iraqi army recruits arrive at the compound of 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 8th IA Division, Sept. 1 for transportation to their basic training site. At right, recruits line up to be counted and processed at the Iskandariyah compound Sept. 2.



Iraqi recruits head to basic training

SGT. MARCUS BUTLER
4TH BCT (ABN.), 25TH INF. DIV.

ISKANDARIYAH — Shiite and Sunni Muslims came from far and wide Sept. 2 to begin working together for the greater good of their country.

Sparked by a successful recruiting campaign, these Iraqis crossed sectarian lines and began their journey toward becoming the newest members of the Iraqi army.

Congregating at the compound of 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division, located adjacent to Forward Operating Base Iskandariyah, home of 1st Battalion, 501st Airborne, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, these new recruits arrived by the truck load to be processed and transported to their basic training.

"In my neighborhood, I see that things are getting better and I want to be part of the change in the right direction."

— Ali Raghieb,
Iraqi army recruit, Jurf as Sakhr

"The recruiting drive started on Aug. 12th and lasted through the 16th," said Capt. Douglas Mulvaney, a member of Military Transitional Team 248. "In all, the drive yielded 1,500 Iraqis willing to join the Iraqi army."

For many of the recruits, the fact that they have an opportunity to do something to help their country is reward enough. For some, though, this

means so much more.

"I am just glad that I have a chance to come here and be given the opportunity to show everyone that we want to change and make a better way of life," said Ali Raghieb, one of the recruits out of Jurf as Sakhr, Iraq. "In my neighborhood, I see that things are getting better and I want to be part of the change in the right direction."

Getting from their homes to Iskandariyah was the biggest challenge for most of the recruits because of the threat of sectarian violence.

"The Iraqi army has given these people an opportunity to make something better for themselves and their friends and neighbors," Mulvaney said. "It has erased the danger of traveling to and from different areas, which would have

See BASIC, Page 3



HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342-1400

7 September 2007

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians of Multi-National Force-Iraq:

We are now over two-and-a-half months into the surge of offensive operations made possible by the surge of forces, and I want to share with you my view of how I think we're doing. This letter is a bit longer than previous ones, since I feel you deserve a detailed description of what I believe we have – and have not – accomplished, as Ambassador Crocker and I finalize the assessment we will provide shortly to Congress.

Up front, my sense is that we have achieved tactical momentum and wrested the initiative from our enemies in a number of areas of Iraq. The result has been progress in the security arena, although it has, as you know, been uneven. Additionally, as you all appreciate very well, innumerable tasks remain and much hard work lies ahead. We are, in short, a long way from the goal line, but we do have the ball and we are driving down the field.

We face a situation that is exceedingly complex. Al Qaeda, associated insurgent groups, and militia extremists, some supported by Iran, continue to carry out attacks on us, our Iraqi partners, and the Iraqi civilians we seek to secure. We have to contend with the relentless pace of operations, the crushing heat, and the emotions that we all experience during long deployments and tough combat. And we operate against a backdrop of limited Iraqi governmental capacity, institutions trying to rebuild, and various forms of corruption. All of this takes place in a climate of distrust and fear that stems from the sectarian violence that did so much damage to the fabric of Iraqi society in 2006 and into 2007, not to mention the decades of repression under Saddam's brutal regime. Tragically, sectarian violence continues to cause death and displacement in Baghdad and elsewhere, albeit at considerably reduced levels from 8 months ago, due, in large part, to your hard work and sacrifice together with our Iraqi counterparts.

In spite of these challenges, our operations – particularly the offensive operations we have conducted since mid-June – have helped produce progress in many areas on the ground. In fact, the number of attacks across the country has declined in 8 of the past 11 weeks, reaching during the last week in August a level not seen since June 2006. This trend is not just a result of greater numbers of Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces; it also reflects your determination, courage, and skill in conducting counterinsurgency operations. By taking the fight to the enemy, you have killed or captured dozens of leaders and thousands of members of Al Qaeda-Iraq and extremist militia elements, you have taken many of Al Qaeda's former sanctuaries away from them, and you have dismantled a number of their car bomb and improvised explosive device networks. By living among the population with our Iraqi partners, you have been holding the areas you have cleared. By helping Iraqis reestablish basic services and local governance, you have helped exploit the security gains. And by partnering closely with Iraqi Security Forces, you have been strengthening Iraqi elements that will one day have sole responsibility for protecting their population. Indeed, while Iraqi forces clearly remain a work in progress, Iraqi soldiers and police are very much in the fight, and they continue to sustain losses that are two to three times our losses.

We are also building momentum in an emerging area of considerable importance – local reconciliation. Local Iraqi leaders are coming forward, opposing extremists, and establishing provisional units of neighborhood security volunteers. With growing Government of Iraq support, these volunteers are being integrated into legitimate security institutions to help improve local security. While this concept is playing out differently in various areas across Iraq, it is grounded in a desire shared by increasing numbers of Iraqis – to oppose extremist elements and their ideologies. This is very significant because, as many of you know firsthand, extremists cannot survive without the support of the population. The popular rejection of Al Qaeda and its ideology has, for example, helped transform Anbar Province this year from one of the most dangerous areas of Iraq to one of the safest. The popular rejection of extremists has helped Coalition and Iraqi Forces take



- 2 -

away other areas from Al Qaeda as well, and we are seeing a spread of this sentiment in an ever-increasing number of Sunni areas. Now, in fact, we are also seeing a desire to reject extremists emerge in many Shi'a areas.

The progress has not, to be sure, been uniform across Baghdad or across Iraq. Accomplishments in some areas – for example, in Ramadi and in Anbar Province – have been greater than any of us might have predicted six months ago. The achievements in some other areas – for example, in some particularly challenging Baghdad neighborhoods and in reducing overall civilian casualties, especially those caused by periodic, barbaric Al Qaeda bombings – have not been as dramatic. However, the overall trajectory has been encouraging, especially when compared to the situation at the height of the sectarian violence in late 2006 and early 2007.

Many of us had hoped this summer would be a time of tangible political progress at the national level as well. One of the justifications for the surge, after all, was that it would help create the space for Iraqi leaders to tackle the tough questions and agree on key pieces of "national reconciliation" legislation. It has not worked out as we had hoped. All participants, Iraqi and coalition alike, are dissatisfied by the halting progress on major legislative initiatives such as the oil framework law, revenue sharing, and de-ba'athification reform. At the same time, however, our appreciation of what this legislation represents for Iraqi leaders has grown. These laws are truly fundamental in nature and will help determine how Iraqis will share power and resources in the new Iraq. While much work remains to be done before these critical issues are resolved, the seriousness with which Iraqi leaders came together at their summit in late August has given hope that they are up to the task before them, even if it is clearly taking more time than we initially expected.

In the coming months, our coalition's countries and all Iraqis will continue to depend on each of you and on our Iraqi counterparts to keep the pressure on the extremists, to help improve security and strengthen the rule of law for all Iraqis, to work with the Government of Iraq to integrate local volunteers into local security and national institutions, to assist with the restoration and improvement of basic services, and to continue the development of conditions that foster reconciliation. For our part, Ambassador Crocker and I will continue to do everything in our power to help the Prime Minister and the Government of Iraq achieve the meaningful results that will ensure that your sacrifices and those of your comrades help produce sustainable security for Iraq over the long term. A stable and secure Iraq that denies extremists a safe haven and has a government that is representative of and responsive to all Iraqis helps protect the vital interests of our coalition countries. A stable and secure Iraq will also benefit Iraq's citizens and Iraq's neighbors alike, bringing calm to a region full of challenges and employing Iraq's human capital and natural resource blessings for the benefit of all.

As I noted at the outset of this letter, over the next few days, Ambassador Crocker and I will share with the U.S. Congress and the American people our assessment of the situation in Iraq. I will also describe the recommendations I have provided to my chain of command. I will go before Congress conscious of the strain on our forces, the sacrifices that you and your families are making, the gains we have made in Iraq, the challenges that remain, and the importance of building on what we and our Iraqi counterparts have fought so hard to achieve.

Thanks once again for what each of you continues to do. Our Nations have asked much of you and your families. It remains the greatest of honors to serve with you.

Sincerely,

David H. Petraeus

David H. Petraeus
General, United States Army
Commanding



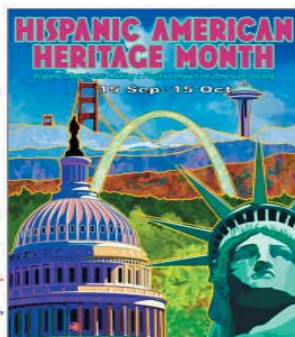
Attention, Attention!



WHO: MND-C Equal Opportunity Office

WHAT: Hispanic Heritage Observation
NEXT IPR

WHY: To solicit support for the upcoming Observation. The MND-C Equal Opportunity Office is looking for VOLUNTEERS who would like to help in building this program. We need Ushers, set up personnel, dancers, singers, poets, and much more...



NEXT IPR: Sep. 8
Time: 2 p.m.
***EO Office, Bldg 51,**
Trailer #2, next to IG
Please come by!

POC: MND-C EO Office
VOIP: 822-7654 or 7653
Email: edwin.ayres@iraq.centcom.mil,
rufus.jewiss@iraq.centcom.mil,
delanor.nurse@iraq.centcom.mil,
tanya.toussaint@iraq.centcom.mil

A CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMITMENT

Join us at Task Force Marne Headquarters for a re-enlistment
September 11, 2007 Time: 0940

"Rock of the Marne"

THE Dog Face Daily

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2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry)
4th Brigade (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division
3rd Combat Aviation Brigade
214th Fires Brigade
82nd Sustainment Brigade
720th Military Police Battalion
Mobile Unit 3 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion

BASIC: *Iraqi recruits get started with training*

From Page 1

previously discouraged any activity like joining the Iraqi army."

The Iraqi army transportation system took recruits from the compound to their basic training location.

"Seeing how they arranged for the recruits to get here safely is a true testament that the Iraqi army system structure really works," Mulvaney said.

For recruits, what awaits them is a rigorous 45-day training program where they will learn basic soldiering skills, rank structure and general military knowledge. Following basic training, the new soldiers will be assigned to different battalions and then go through a 30-day skill screening process to determine their strengths and be placed in a position equivalent to their skills.

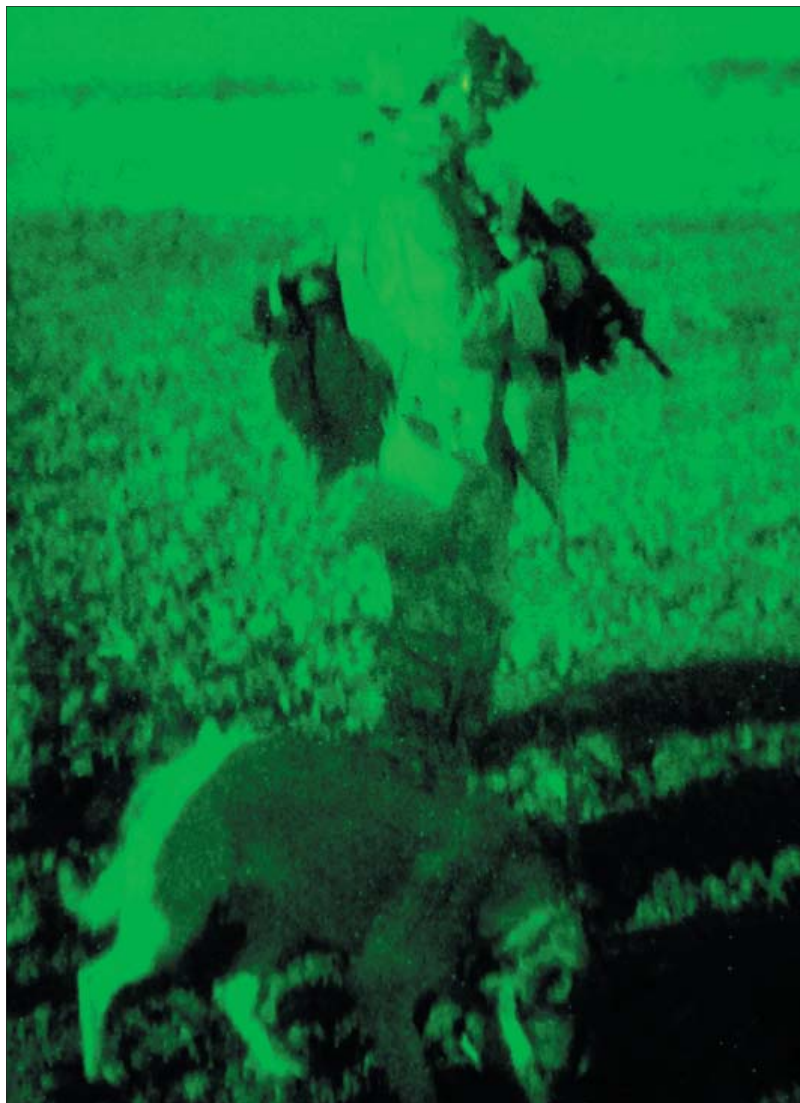
"I am excited about the training we are about to receive," said Hussein Resan Thaif, a native of Mussaiyib, Iraq. "I will do everything I can to serve my country and help my family to the best of my ability."

"One of the biggest successes for this drive is that 1,500 people are going to be back to work," Mulvaney said. "This eliminates the numbers of people who may turn to militia for money because it gives them another option versus killing for sectarian reasons."

The recruitment drive was a joint effort between MiTT 248 and 2/4/8 IA Div. After months of planning and preparation, the vision has come full circle.

"Having been there side-by-side from the beginning and seeing these Iraqis arrive in swarms gives our Military Transitional Team and the Iraqi army a great sense of accomplishment," Mulvaney said. "Seeing all of our hard work pay off tells us we have done a small part to help each other make this country a safer place to live."

No stone unturned ...



Spc. Adam Sanders

A Soldier from 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, searches through a crop field with his military working dog during an air assault mission Sept. 2 in Adwaniyah.

Safety Thought of the Day

Ladder Safety

- Ladders should be inspected for deficiencies prior to use.
- Never come down a ladder facing out.
- Keep three points of contact all times.
- The top of all ladders should extend 3 feet beyond the structure being climbed.
- During wet conditions, use extreme caution and take your time.
- Never allow more than one person on a ladder at a time.
- Use of homemade wooden ladders is strongly discouraged. Replacing them with a manufactured ladder which meets OSHA standards is recommended.

Headline Highlights

Talking back; Japanese leeches; mail delay

Woman fired for talking back

BEIJING (Reuters) — A Chinese woman is suing her former employer after falling victim to the company policy of firing staff who contradict their boss three times, local media reported on Thursday.

HWA-1 Enterprise Co. Ltd., a light industrial manufacturer based in China's southeastern port city of Xiamen, sacked a woman surnamed Ni for refusing to pay fines she incurred for talking back to superiors, Xinhua news agency said, citing a local newspaper.

The company's policy held that a "first contradiction of superiors" would incur a fine of 30 yuan (\$4), a second would incur 100 yuan, and a third would warrant dismissal, the agency said.

Ni incurred a 30 yuan fine after taking umbrage with her factory supervisor for reprimanding her for not filling in a form.

"The factory head told me that, according to company rules, no matter whether management is right or wrong, employees are not allowed to contradict them and must obey," Xinhua quoted Ni as saying.

Ni was then threatened with a 100 yuan fine for refusing to pay the first fine, and was sacked after she threatened to report her supervisor to the company's human resource's department.

The factory's supervisor, surnamed Cao, said it was his legal right to sack Ni.

"The company can terminate the contract of employees who seriously breach labor discipline or the company's rules," Xinhua quoted Cao as saying.

Leeches invade Tokyo

TOKYO (Reuters) — Long confined to the mountains, Japanese leeches are invading residential areas, causing swelling, itching and general discomfort with their blood-thirsty ways.

Yamabiru, or land leeches, have become a problem in 29 of Japan's 47 prefectures, according to the Institute for Environmental Culture, a private research facility in Chiba prefecture, east of Tokyo.

The little suckers are riding into towns and villages, hitching lifts on deer and boar whose numbers have grown due to re-forestation and dwindling rural populations.

Once there, the leeches, which measure in at about 1.5 cms before a meal, take to feasting on warm human flesh.

"Yamabiru will climb into people's socks and stay for about an hour, growing five to 10 times in size. Unlike with water leeches, people don't immediately realize they've been bitten. Only later when they see their blood-soaked feet, do they realize what has happened," said Shigekazu Tani, the institute's director.

"The real problem is that the bleeding won't stop and the affected area swells up and really itches," he added.

The best way to deal with the tiny

vampires?

"We can cut down trees and mow long grass to dissuade wild animals from coming too close, and create sunny habitats that are inhospitable to leeches. We can also spread pesticides that kill the leeches," Tani said.

"Or we can just tough it out."

Postman held back mail

BRUSSELS (Reuters) — A Belgian postman who lightened his mailbag by holding back thousands of letters and packages at home for up to five years now faces dismissal.

"What was strange in this case was that he kept them all in his flat and that, while he opened a lot, he appears to have left the contents in the envelopes," a spokesman for the postal service said. An internal control alerted the Post Office to the problem and prompted a police search of the man's home last week.

"A couple of thousand items of mail were found in his flat. We sorted through them last week and they are being sent out today with a note of apology," the spokesman said.

He added that postal workers occasionally failed in their duties, but typically threw away mail.

This postman, whose rounds were in and near the eastern town of Hasselt, had apparently reduced his deliveries only very gradually.

The man had been immediately suspended and was likely to be dismissed, the spokesman said.

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	9		6				8	
	7		5	1	2			
	4						1	
5						7		2
1								3
8			9					6
		3						5
			8	6	9		3	
	1				3		4	

from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

3	4	7	8	2	5	6	9	1
5	9	6	4	1	7	3	2	8
2	1	8	6	3	9	5	7	4
4	6	9	3	7	8	1	5	2
8	2	3	6	1	7	7	4	9
1	7	5	9	4	2	8	6	3
7	5	1	2	8	4	9	3	6
9	3	4	1	5	6	2	8	7
6	8	2	7	9	3	4	1	5

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Saturday

il seb-it