

Iraqi Leaders Commit to Unity During Summit

By Spc. Shejal Pulivarti
1-1 Cav. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq –Sheiks of all tribes, Iraqi Army and police leaders, representatives of the Iraqi government and leaders from the 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division and Multi-National Division-Baghdad gathered at an Iraqi Police station in Nassir Wa Salam, Iraq to discuss further steps to advance bringing the region back to the government of Iraq during the Northwest Baghdad Regional Security Summit Dec 6.

Approximately 1,000 sheiks and local leaders attended the second installment of a series of reconciliation meetings that have taken place between the Sunni and Shia sheiks in the 1st Cavalry Division's area of operations. Tribal and governmental leadership from Abu Ghraib, Fallujah, Tarmiyah, and the Anbar province came together to meet with senior leaders from the Baghdad provincial

government, national government and the Iraqi Security Forces.

The meeting was recognized by representatives of the prime minister, councilmen, senior Iraqi tribal and military leaders as well as the national party, Iraq Awakening.

"This meeting is a great opportunity to bring together local leaders, tribal leaders and government leaders to speak with the national and provincial government to develop solutions to the problems in the area," said Boulder, Colo., native Maj. Geoffrey Norman, executive officer, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div. "It affords them the opportunity to exchange dialogue on how to move forward and rid the community of the cancer of extremism."

The gathering focused on the development of a security sustained by Iraqi security forces supported by the government allowing Coalition Forces to shift away from direct



(Photo by Lt. Col. Scott Bleichwehl, MND-B PAO)

Col. Paul E. Funk II (left), commander of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division discusses the advancements of security in the area with a local tribal leader and Lt. Col. Kurt Pinkerton, commander of 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment during the second installment of the Northwest Baghdad Regional Security Summit held in Nassir Wa Salam, Iraq, Dec. 6.

involvement in security to focusing on the efforts for establishing essential services headed by Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

"The people of this community and the government

have demonstrated their willingness to serve," said Lt. Col. Kurt Pinkerton, commander of 2-5 Cavalry.

"That's the reason security is the way it is, the people are willing to serve. This is the beginning of unity," he added.

Soldiers Get Iraqi Children Excited About Health

By Sgt. Robert Yde
2-1 Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Everyone knows that when you're sick you go to the doctor; however, there are many things that can be done to prevent illness in the first place. These preventive measures, such as practicing good personal hygiene, were the focus of a health fair that Soldiers from

Company E, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment and Co. C, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, both of whom are part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted for students at the Al Aflah Elementary School in Salhiyah Dec. 3.

"We're here with a couple of people from 15th BSB's preventive medicine section teaching the local children and teach-

ers how to stay healthy in Iraq – keeping germs down, brushing your teeth, just general public health," Co. E, 1-5 Cav. commander and Butler, Pa. native, Capt. Greg Turner said. "It's just basically something to help better the community."

A group of about 30 students attended a presentation given by Sgt. Danielle

Iraqi National Police Graduate Course

By Spc. Courtney E. Marulli
2-2 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq — After four days of intense training, the fourth class of Iraqi National Policemen graduate from the leadership course on Nov. 29. The course is designed by Iraqis and taught by members of the 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi

National Police Military Transition Team.

Maj. Robel Ramirez, 1-4-1 Battalion NPTT chief, said the policemen go through several training exercises during the week that leads to an extensive exercise on the last day that combines all the tactics. The course is also taught according to what Col. Kassim, the 1-4-1 battalion commander wants his policemen to approve upon.

The skills learned include stacking to

enter a house, tactical movement through a courtyard, clearing a house, reaction to contact and treating and evacuating a casualty. The policemen learned how to rely on each other as the exercise involved detaining a suspect and treating a casualty while under fire.

Ramirez, a native of Naranjito, Puerto Rico, said each class is unique, but that this class had more experienced and mature policemen. Since they have done police work longer, they had to focus on getting past preconceived notions of how to do things. Once they did that, Ramirez said they progressed and were very successful during their training.

“Overall, I’m really proud of the progress we have made in the past year,” he said of all the policemen that have been trained. “Training is the key.”

With each class that graduates, Ramirez said things are getting closer for them to become self-sustaining. The idea is to offer this training once a month, and eventually get the NPs to the point that they are teaching their own classes with Coalition Forces merely there to interject if need be, Ramirez said.

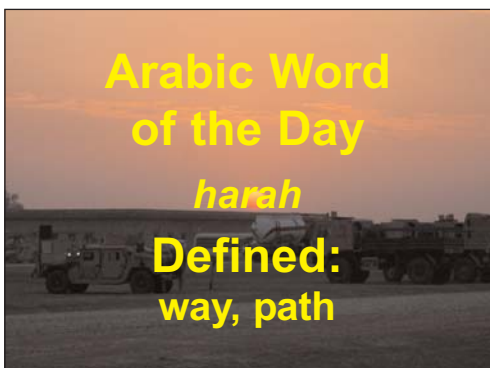
“We’re closer than we were six



(Photo by Spc. Courtney E. Marulli, 2nd IBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. Public Affairs)

Soldiers in 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi National Police Division undergo an exercise taught by the 1-4-1 NP Military Transition Team.

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Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 68
Low: 50



Tomorrow

High: 68
Low: 50



Thursday

High: 71
Low: 53

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(Photo by Sgt. Robert Yde, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)

Sgt. Danielle Stephens, a preventive medicine specialist with Co. C, 15th BSB, 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., hands out a tube of toothpaste to a student at Salhiyah's Al Aflaph Elementary School during a health awareness presentation Dec. 3.

Troops Show Salhiyah Children How to Stay Healthy

Health

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Stephens, a Preventive Medicine specialist, while a group of teachers received a similar presentation from the brigade's Preventive Medicine officer, 1st Lt. Gabrielle Caldara.

"We talked about bacteria and viruses – especially the importance of hand washing. Hand washing is the first defense in helping with any illness," Stephens, who is originally from Phoenix, said.

Several other topics were also discussed during the presentation to include: brushing

your teeth daily, healthy eating habits, and the dangers of mosquitoes and rabid animals.

Stephens said that by offering the presentation to the teachers as well as the students, she and Caldara hope that it ensures they will have the information they needed to help the students follow up on what they learned.

"It's kind of like a train-the-trainer," Stephens said. "They will be able to continue on with the training with the kids and teach them how to wash their hands and things like that."

Along with the presentation Stephens also handed out several items such as toothpaste

and hand sanitizer to the children.

She said that while she has given similar types of presentations to American school children, this was the first time she has done this in Iraq.

"I love working with the kids," she said.

"This has probably been one of the most enjoyable experiences that I've had here. Kids are the same everywhere, whether they are in Iraq or the United States," she added.

Stephens also mentioned that she was surprised by the level of knowledge that the students already had, as they successfully answered question after question that she posed to

them.

"They're very aware – especially of rabies," she said. "Some of the questions I asked about rabies and some of the pictures that we showed, they knew exactly what it was before I told them. So they're very aware of what their environment is and what it takes to keep themselves safe; they're pretty smart kids."

"If you can touch one or two and the fact that they're kids and their young – when you start young hopefully when they get older, they'll keep it -- especially in regards to recycling and some of the more important things they need here in Iraq."

Iraqi Police Tackle, Complete Training

Police

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months ago," he said.

Despite training well, some of the difficulties were the language barrier. However, interpreters limited that burden and enabled communication to facilitate more smoothly than it would have otherwise.

Ramirez said the cultural barrier was also an obstacle, as the Iraqi policemen think that if they have trained once, they are good and don't realize that they need to continuously train.

Capt. Woodrow D. Pengelly, operations officer for the 1-4-1 NPTT, said they would not have been able to train the NP's without Kassim, the NP's strong and aggressive battalion commander.

Pengelly, a native of Portland, Ore., said Kassim supports the training and is willing to work around mission requirements to ensure his policemen get the proper training they need.

Master Sgt. Richard A. Jones, a native of Cadiz, Ohio, and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 1-4-1 NPTT, said this class was good at handling checkpoints. They also learned how to apply combat lifesaving skills and run ranges.

"We do what he (Kassim) wants his Soldiers to train on," he said. "It's Iraqi led."

Jones said the training is basically what the policemen deal with on a daily basis. However, their weaknesses were clearing buildings, muzzle awareness and trigger discipline. This class was the first group to be on time everyday and there weren't any problems with them.

As a senior NCO, Jones said seeing younger American Soldiers working with the Iraqi Soldiers is good because it enables them to really learn about the culture as they might find themselves over here two or three more times.

"It expands their minds, and they get experience working with them," he said.

Jones said it also enables them to realize that not every Iraqi National Policemen is involved with a militia or try-



(Photo by Spc. Courtney E. Marulli, 2-2 Inf. Div. Public Affairs)

Spc. Thomas B. Richardson, a native of Chambers County, Ala., and an infantryman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-16 Infantry Regiment, based out of Fort Riley, Kansas roleplayed as the driver of a truck with a bomb in it during training.

ing to hurt Coalition Forces.

"For me it's more fulfilling," he said of being on a military transition team.

Master Sgt. Jeff N. Curd, a native of Paducah, Kentucky, and an operations NCO for the 1-4-1 NPTT, said this is his second time being on a transition team. The first time he worked with the Iraqi Army.

"I love it," he said. "Both times I asked to come and I probably would come back again."

Curd, a former drill sergeant, said when he can see the difference he's made, it gives him a sense of fulfillment.

Curd said the training is important as the NP's operations temp is too heavy for them to have training discipline as they can't afford to take a lot of people to dedicate to training.

"Because there's not established training courses here," he said. "They don't have the trainers to train."

Curd said an American private is more experienced to train others just by working with his peers. The typical private

goes to Basic Combat Training, then Advanced Individual Training and then arrives at his unit where he continues to train. The Iraqi National Policemen, Curd said, go from basic training to working. They learn on the job.

"They just do basic training and the next time they deal with IEDs is when they find them on the road," he said.

Sgt. 1st Class Bruce A. Landon, a native of Fayetteville, N.C., and an operations NCO for 1-4-1 NPTT, said the national policemen did well and were always motivated during the training.

"I think they really enjoy the training," he said. "They don't get much time to train because they're always working."

Landon said overall he thinks the group did well, but he hopes they have more time to train in the future.

Spc. Thomas B. Richardson, a native of Chambers County, Ala., Pfc. Allen J. Wick, a native of Medicine Lake, Mont., and Spc. Erik D. Rillera, a native of Cerritos, Calif., are all infantrymen in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, based out of Fort Riley, Kansas, and currently attached to 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

Each Soldier played a role in the training. Richardson was the driver of a truck with a bomb, Wick was a shooter and Rillera was a casualty.

Wick said it makes him feel like he's accomplishing something when he helps train the Iraqi National Policemen.

"They catch on pretty quick, but their biggest problem is flagging," he said.

Wick said it was nice to work with them as it gave him a sense of how they react to Coalition Forces and enabled him to know what they want to learn.

Richardson, who made the NP's work while detaining him, said the training made them realize what they will face with detainees. He said they learned that a detainee isn't always just going to sit there and that they have to keep a vigilant watch.

Training was a little rough in the beginning, Richardson said, but overall it went well.