



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Iraqi soldiers march to a ceremony welcoming them as the first-ever class to attend the Task Force Marne NCO Academy at FOB Kalsu Jan. 15.

## Leaders' course welcomes first class of Iraqi NCOs

SPC. EMILY J. WILSONCROFT  
EDITOR

FOB KALSU — As the midday sun warmed the ground at Forward Operating Base Kalsu Jan. 15, 56 Iraqi soldiers stood beside 18 U.S. NCOs, in front of two countries' flags, with one common purpose, and made history.

The Iraqi soldiers comprised the first group to begin training at the new Task Force Marne NCO Academy, and the first-ever group of Iraqi Security Forces to attend a leaders' course.

Multi-National Division — Center Command Sergeant Major Jesse L. Andrews Jr. welcomed the soldiers with a short ceremony.

"The two-week course that we have designed will teach you, the students, the basics in leadership and

combat tactics, and enhance your procedural abilities to be able to train, teach, coach and mentor soldiers in your units," Andrews told the trainees through an interpreter. "For years, our NCO Corps has been called the 'backbone of the Army.' We want NCOs and leaders of the Iraqi Security Forces to gain this same distinction — to become the backbone of the ISF."

His words were met with enthusiastic applause from the Iraqis, who seemed eager to get started.

"I'm very happy to be here," said Iraqi platoon leader Gessam Gafel Shanan, a member of 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division. "All this training is going to make our NCOs stronger and more able to learn from our (U.S.) partners."



Sgt. Jason Stadel

Iraqi soldiers salute during the playing of Iraq's national anthem at a welcoming ceremony for TF Marne NCO Academy students Jan. 15 at FOB Kalsu.

Staff Sgt. Deoneza Payne, the Academy's NCO in charge of personnel, said she was looking forward to the course as much as the Iraqis were.

"I see our Soldiers working together hand-in-hand with their soldiers, learning from each other," she said. "This is a partnership — it's not only their school; it's our

school, too."

Hamid Yunis, an Iraqi squad leader from 1st Bde., 6th IA Div., said as an NCO, he already has an idea of how to lead his soldiers, but is also looking forward to developing his skills.

With competence comes confidence, and the Acade-

**See ACADEMY, Page 3**



Photos by Pvt. Christopher McKenna

A dentist with the Iraqi Ministry of Health examines a man's teeth with assistance from Capt. Tran Quach-Miller, a dentist with Company C, 626th Brigade Support Battalion during a CME in Abu Farris Jan. 12. At left, IA soldiers and Soldiers with 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), hand out meals and water to Iraqi children during the Abu Farris engagement.

## Medical engagement a success in Abu Farris

PVT. CHRISTOPHER MCKENNA  
3RD BCT, 101ST ABN. DIV. (AASLT)

**CAMP STRIKER** — Gloomy weather did not deter Iraqi doctors, Iraqi Army medics and Coalition Forces from holding a coordinated medical engagement in Abu Farris Jan. 12.

A total of 665 citizens from four tribes in the surrounding area were treated for medical and dental issues at the CME. Coalition Forces supervised the event, which was run by the IA with seven teams of Iraqi doctors.

"It was pretty much hands off for us, because the Iraqi Army did an extremely good job," said 1st Lt. Michael Podojil, fire support officer for Company B, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regi-

ment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Dr. Anwar Abbas, with the Iraqi Ministry of Health, treated nearly 180 patients himself.

"It is nice to see the Iraqi people meet together and, as a doctor, I give my best to help and treat the people of my country," Abbas said. This was the first CME in the area since the beginning of the troop surge in 2007.

"For this to even occur it took two months to coordinate the air travel for the doctors and to make sure the needed medical supplies and doctors would be present," Podojil said.

Abbas said the preparation and coordination paid off.

"Coalition and Iraqi forces provided

a good environment to achieve such a peaceful mission," Abbas said.

Podojil said these types of missions build citizens' confidence in their government and the Iraqi Army.

"This is showing the Iraqi people that we are here to support the Iraqi Army, and that the Iraqi Army will continue to be here to support them," Podojil said. "It also shows that their medical system can work, and that they will be able to get support medically from their government.

"We have been working hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Army; we have their support just as they have ours, and this CME is just another example of where we come together and help the community of Abu Farris."

### THE Dog Face Daily

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# ACADEMY: *First-ever group of Iraqi NCOs begin training at Kalsu*

From Page 1

my's aim is to give Iraqi NCOs a combination of those two qualities as they receive two weeks of diverse training in everything from first aid to combat-ives.

"They're going to be armed with the right tools, the right skill sets to go out there to be able to make sound and timed decisions in this ever-changing combat environment that we're operating in right now," Andrews said.

Shanan, who has been in the Iraqi Army for nearly three years, added that his hope was for terrorism in Iraq to be wiped out during this generation, and sees the NCO Academy as a stepping stone toward that goal.

"I think — no, I'm sure, that after this experience, our NCOs will be ready to stand in the Iraqi streets and follow their training to protect the people. Then we can have a normal life," he said as he marched his soldiers off to their first class.

"This is something new; we are really excited to go out and practice what we



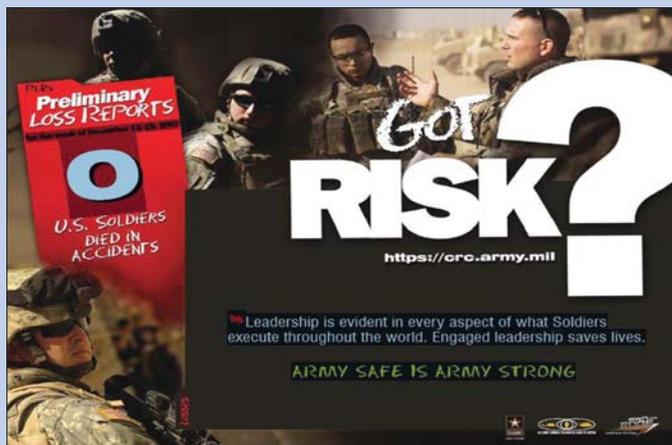
Photos by Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft  
Iraqi soldiers attend their first class at the TF Marne NCO Academy. At right, a 1st Platoon Iraqi NCO takes notes in a class on ethics and professionalism.



learn here," Yunis said. "We are hoping our Army is going to get stronger and stronger every year, and through this we can gain peace and stability."

## Safety Thought of the Day Got Risk?

- Designed to increase awareness of the risks Soldiers face and the impact of loss.
- Distributed weekly and reviews the Army's accident fatalities for a given week.
- For the first time in more than a year there were no fatalities in a week.
- Reason for success:
  - Leader engagement
  - Well-trained and disciplined Soldiers
  - Proper use and integration of composite risk management
  - Clear standards — known and enforced
  - Proactive identification and mitigation of hazards
- Success breeds success



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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DACS-SF

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, United States Army Forces Command, 1777 Hardee Avenue SW, Fort McPherson, GA 30330-1062

SUBJECT: Director of Army Safety Composite Risk Management Award – 3rd Infantry Division

1. Congratulations on the selection of the 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) as the recipient of the Director of Army Safety Composite Risk Management Award. 3ID earned this award by demonstrating exemplary leadership and employing the tenants of Composite Risk Management to reduce the command's accident fatality rate. The command implemented proactive measures such as focusing on motorcycle safety, clearing tree-lined roads and installing safety signs, renovating an off-duty facility on the installation for Soldiers in an effort to combat drinking and driving, and emplacing an extensive safety message campaign. This dedication to safety awareness and the preservation of vital Army resources deserves due recognition.

2. Again, please pass my congratulations to 3ID on a job well done and forward photos of the award presentation to [aso@hqda.army.mil](mailto:aso@hqda.army.mil) so we can showcase your unit's significant safety accomplishments.

3. Army Safe is Army Strong!

SIR  
The Marne Team  
Super Job!  
Thanks -  
Bill

WHR  
WHR

WILLIAM H. FORRESTER  
Brigadier General, US Army  
Director of Army Safety

Headline Highlights

# Blair's first text; unappealing Spanish anthem

## Man throws self out with tree

BERLIN (Reuters) — A German man threw himself out of a third-story window along with a Christmas tree during a late-night attempt to dispose of his festive decorations.

The man fell 22 feet from his flat after he lost his balance throwing the tree onto the street on Saturday, police in the western city of Moenchengladbach said. The tree did not break the victim's fall.

"There's a TV advert showing people having fun throwing their old Christmas trees out the window," said police spokesman Willy Thevessen on Monday. "But you're not supposed to jump with them."

The man was taken to hospital in critical condition with severe head injuries after eyewitnesses saw him fall.

## Blair's first text message causes confusion for friend

PARIS (Reuters) — It's not often that former prime minister Tony Blair is not recognised. But his first foray into the world of mobile phone messaging left one friend puzzled.

Blair told a conference organised by France's ruling UMP party in Paris he got his first mobile phone six months ago.

"When I lived at Downing Street I never had one. I got my first mobile the day I left," said Blair, who is now a Middle East envoy.

"I sent an SMS (short message service) to a friend, but given my lack of technological knowledge I didn't real-

ize the telephone hadn't identified me as the sender. I got an SMS back saying: 'But sorry, who are you?'" Blair said.

## Spanish anthem lyrics 'stink'

MADRID (Reuters) — New lyrics proposed for Spain's national anthem "stink", according to a prominent politician, and the country's athletes may have to keep singing "la la la" for a while longer in the winner's circle.

Spain's national anthem, the "Royal March", has been played without words since 1978, when previous lyrics approved by right-wing dictator Francisco Franco were ditched.

Ever since, Spanish athletes have admitted to jealousy of foreign opponents with words to sing at sporting events. Some have even resorted to chanting "la la la."

But new lyrics unveiled on Friday, which were selected in a competition organised by the Spanish Olympic Committee, were derided by members of parliament, who will have the final say on whether they become official.

"They stink," said Gaspar Llamazares, leader of the small left-wing United Left party, who said they reminded him of the Franco era, when Spanish national symbols such as the flag became associated with the political right.

The proposed anthem, which if approved would be played at state as well as sporting events, avoids references to controversial areas such as religion and intones mildly about Spain, "from its green valleys to the immense sea."

But its first words, "Long Live Spain!"

have an authoritarian ring for many on the left and are unlikely to appeal to separatists in the Basque Country and Catalonia.

The spokesman in the Spanish parliament for Catalan separatist party Esquerra, Joan Tarda, said he did not want to comment on the proposal, but that it was reasonable for the Spanish nation to have an anthem with words.

"Just as our nation, Catalonia, has an anthem," Tarda said, referring to the Catalan hymn Els Segadors, which calls for Spanish invaders to be given "a good blow with the sickle."

Not even the political right showed much enthusiasm for the words, with the leader of the opposition Popular Party, Mariano Rajoy, preferring not to give his opinion on them.

The idea for a lyrics competition came to Olympic Committee Chairman Alejandro Blanco after hearing Liverpool soccer fans bellow out "You'll Never Walk Alone" at Anfield stadium. He wanted the words to be kept secret for another week, when they would have been sung in public by Spanish opera star Placido Domingo, but they were leaked to a newspaper.

"I'm much more than angry," Blanco told reporters. "This isn't just some silly little nonsense. This should be done with style."

The lyrics' author turned out to be Paulino Cubero, an unemployed 52-year-old man from La Mancha, who described himself as "a loser" at a news conference in Madrid.

"I wanted to write an anthem for normal people, people who take the metro on their way to work," Cubero said.

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from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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

## ARABIC PHRASE OF THE DAY

Stay away

*KHell-leek beh-AAed*