

THE

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Serving Task Force Marne



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Sgt. Joshua Seymour, with Co. A, 411th CA, points to fish surfacing for food as he conducts an assessment of a fish farm in Qarghuli Village. (Inset) The owners of an Arab Jassim fish farm proudly display fish from their pond.

Fish farms make a comeback in Babil

MND-C PAO

BAGHDAD – In Babil Province, fish farms have begun to thrive as Task Force Marne Soldiers take on a critical role in rebuilding this vital industry.

Thanks to the vision of Col. Thomas James, commander of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, and Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, commander of Multi-National Division – Center, along with help from Soldiers of

the 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., residents in the region are benefiting from this massive undertaking.

“After securing our area of operations in MND-C, our goal is achieving sustainable security for the people of our towns and villages,” James said. “One important means of accomplishing this is by providing jobs – including those at the fish farms of Babil Province, where several thousand jobs will be available.”

James went on to describe how creating jobs not only provides employment and income opportunities, but also establishes a positive alternative to joining extremist groups.

The new fish farms have potential to add at least 5,000 direct and indirect local employment opportunities to the region. In al-Hillah, the Euphrates Fish Farm alone will employ

See FARM, page 3

Texas native keeps Delta's shelves stocked

STAFF SGT. CARLOS J. LAZO
214TH FB

FOB DELTA – When she's on the job, the Georgian, El Salvadoran, Lithuanian and American forces can sleep easy, knowing all of their equipment is good to go.

"We're the heartbeat of all these veins," said Staff Sgt. Valerie G. Morris, 214th Fires Brigade property book officer and supply section noncommissioned officer in charge, as she points to all the different countries annotated on her tracking chart.

The Fort Worth, Texas, native is responsible for fulfilling all the supply demands on FOB Delta.

Normally, the job requires a property book officer, three NCOs, and two junior enlisted Soldiers, but not here.

"It's just me," said the soft-voiced Morris.

Her typical day begins at 8 a.m., when she checks her e-mail and prepares for the day's meetings and appointments. Her work schedule varies day to day, with tasks ranging from issuing supplies to verifying every Coalition units hand-receipts the other. All these events typically keep her at work until 10 p.m., but she understands the importance of her job, she said.

Any item her unit requires—from uniforms to ammunition, vehicles, furniture and even the paint troops use to identify their living areas—comes through her office.

"She is responsible for \$400 million worth of supplies for five different Coalition countries and the 214th FB," said Maj. Dewayne K. Bailey, the brigade sustainment officer in charge

for the 214th FB.

This includes ensuring every country's supply documents and records are in order.

"I make sure their books are straight," said Morris.

Any mistakes or inaccuracies would freeze every account on the FOB, halting all supplies, she said.

Morris has new help with the addition of Spc. Aaron Fletcher, a data system specialist whose job is to direct artillery fire for the Howitzer and Paladin.

Fletcher, from Beckley, W.Va., picks up and issues supplies and organizes the supply storage area.

"He helps tremendously. It's unbelievable," said Morris. "He does a lot of driving and stuff that kept me out of the office. The more time I spend out of the office, the later at night I have to work."

Fletcher said the job offers him independence and the opportunity to work outside.

"He's a really big help," Morris said. "I tell him I appreciate him every day."

Morris also works with representatives from other countries to translate and coordinate for the various Coalition partners on base to fulfill their requests.

Unlike other sections that fell in on the prior unit's work area, Morris and her liaison officers set everything up at FOB Delta.



Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Lazo

Gen. David H. Petraeus, MNF-I commander, presents a commander's coin to Staff Sgt. Valerie G. Morris, 214th FB at FOB Delta. Morris serves as the supply section NCOIC for the 214th FB and every Coalition force unit on FOB Delta.

"We had to build this from the ground up," Morris said.

In the beginning, she would issue all day and catch up on paperwork at night. Although the section is fully functioning now, Morris proactively seeks new ways to improve.

She is currently establishing a re-issue program where Coalition forces on the FOB can trade in their old uniforms for new ones.

"She pays attention to Coalition forces," said 1st Lt. Gediminas Alisaukas, the Lithuanian platoon commander. "If I find I need something, I go straight to Staff Sergeant Morris."

"She is one of the most professional people I've worked with here," he added.

Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq, recognized Morris's professionalism with a commander's coin in August.

THE Dog Face Daily

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FARM: *Fish farm industry begins to thrive in Babil*

From page 1

at least 500 people.

The start up or renovation costs for running fish farms are relatively low, especially for farmers using existing ponds or marshland pools. Nonetheless, the expense can be prohibitive in this local economy, devastated by years of war.

To provide farms with the necessary initial support, Maj. Gen. Lynch authorized the distribution of microgrants, using Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program funds. The CERP funds provide commanders with economic resources to distribute among businesses and projects that need assistance the most.

To date, MND-C has allocated more than \$100,000 for fish farms in their AO. In the 4th BCT battle space, 65 fish farmers have received more than \$59,000 in Quick Reaction Funds microgrants to help jumpstart the industry.

Fish farming is hardly a new concept in Babil. Thousands of fish farms once existed in Iraq, but the war reduced that figure to a few hundred. However, as the industry's capacity expands, fish farming is becoming increasingly important to the Iraqi

economy.

Brig. Gen. Edward Cardon, deputy commander for support for MND-C, pointed out that "aqua-culture development is the perfect agri-business for MND-C. It has an established record of success in this region dating back generations. Each of our brigade combat teams successfully developed fish farm associations to exchange ideas on the cultivation and sustainability of fish crops. They empower entire communities to join together toward business success."

Local fish farmers will not be the only beneficiaries of this project. As part of the "Buy Iraq" initiative, all farmers will purchase feed from a local Iraqi mill. Ideally, that mill will be equipped with an extruder to pelletize the feed, allowing it to float in the fish farm ponds.

On May 1, 15 live haul fish transport tanks will arrive, specially designed and manufactured at the Iskandariyah Industrial Complex. Farmers will procure more of these tanks to haul fish to markets, where local merchants will also profit by selling them to families and restaurants.

The Babil fish farming initiative exemplifies the interagency cooperation that has been effectively rebuilding

the Iraqi economy and infrastructure. The project harnesses the resources of TF Marne Soldiers, local institutions, U.S. Agency for International Development - Inma and embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

These partners combined efforts to refurbish the Euphrates Fish Farm Pumping Station at Hillah, at a cost of more than \$600,000. They successfully completed construction in time for the spring hatch season in March.

Additionally, these institutions worked together to clean and repair the canals that bring water to the fish farms.

USAID-Inma project director Duane Stone explained, "The inlet from the Euphrates River has been dredged sufficiently to allow water to pass through the pump station and on to the canals irrigating the Euphrates Fish Farms and scores of farms in the area that are returning to production."

Similar projects are in the works throughout Babil Province for Iskandariyah, Haswah, and Hillah, along canal systems fed by the Euphrates. In addition to fish farms, many of these same canals also provide irrigation for croplands, benefiting many throughout the region.

Safety Thought of the Day

Crew Coordination

- Crew coordination directly relates to mission performance and includes the following:
 - Involvement of the entire crew in mission planning and rehearsal of critical mission events and contingencies.
 - Development of standardized communication techniques, including the use of confirmation and acknowledgement.
 - Assignment of specific task priorities and responsibilities to each crew member and their confirmation of those responsibilities as part of the crew briefing.
 - Involvement of each crew member in the monitoring of terrain, visual conditions, mission, and other stressors.
 - Create an atmosphere where everybody feels like a team player, regardless of rank or experience.
 - When operations are conducted under conditions of restricted or reduced visibility, as well as night and NVG ops, crew coordination

becomes more critical.

- Information reporting helps the crew maintain a high level of situational awareness.
- Don't forget to complete an After Action Review.



File photo

Headline Highlights

Mexican leftists compared to Hitler; 100-way bra is stolen secret

Controversial Hitler ad ordered off TV

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) – Mexico's top electoral body ordered broadcasters to stop running a controversial TV ad on Monday that compares a firebrand leftist leading a siege of Congress to dictators Hitler and Pinochet.

The TV ad, funded by a Mexican businessman angry at a blockade of Congress by opposition lawmakers trying to derail an oil reform plan, says the antics of protest leader Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador are endangering democracy.

"The complaints committee decided unanimously to order the withdrawal of the spot from today," a spokesman for the Federal Electoral Institute told Reuters.

Leftists seized Congress podiums on April 10 to block a government proposal to lower barriers to private investment in the oil sector, controlled by the state since 1938. The action has left Congress paralyzed.

"Who shuts congresses? In 1933, Adolf Hitler in Germany. In 1939, Benito Mussolini in Italy. In 1973, Augusto Pinochet of Chile," the ad says, over grainy footage of the Nazi leader, his fascist ally in Italy and Chile's late military dictator.

The 30-second spot was a flashback to conservative ads run in the 2006 election campaign calling the former rights activist and then presi-

dential hopeful a danger to Mexico.

"Our democracy is in danger. Our peace is at risk. Mexico does not deserve this," the voice-over said.

The left-wing Party of the Democratic Revolution had asked the electoral institute to order the spot off the air.

Lopez Obrador infuriated President Felipe Calderon by claiming his narrow defeat in the 2006 was fraudulent and paralyzing central Mexico City with sit-in protest camps.

Concerned about increasingly heated rhetoric and street protests over the energy proposal, Calderon's National Action Party had also condemned the ad and said it should be withdrawn.

Left-wingers, who say the proposed energy bill would amount to a sneaking privatization of oil monopoly Pemex, have vowed to stay put until Congress closes for the summer on April 30, unless the PAN offers a four-month debate on the issue.

Woman claims Victoria's Secret stole her bra

NEW YORK (Reuters) – A New York woman filed suit against Limited Brands Inc Monday alleging the parent company of Victoria's Secret stole her idea for its Very Sexy 100-way strapless convertible bra.

Katerina Plew sued in U.S. District Court in lower Manhattan, saying Victoria's Secret infringed her May

2004 patent and knew about the patent since at least April 2006.

"I came up with the idea when I was trying to find a bra to go with one of the two dresses that I could wear to my triplets' christening," said Plew, 38.

"I went crazy looking for a bra where the straps wouldn't show and couldn't find anything," she added.

Her triplets are now nine years old.

Plew, a single mother who works as a paralegal, said she researched her product visiting stores and looking through catalogues, and "that's when I came up with the idea."

She said she spent about \$12,000 to patent the product and developed a prototype.

"When I realized how much it would cost to produce, I started contacting companies," she said.

Plew had an appointment to meet with a Victoria's Secret executive to whom she had mailed a copy of her patent, as well as a DVD with pictures of a model showing her bra, only to have the appointment abruptly canceled.

"A year later I walked into a Victoria's Secret and there was my bra up on the wall," she said.

The bra retails for between \$50 and \$56, according to the Victoria's Secret website. Plew is seeking unspecified damages.

Limited Brands said it does not comment on pending litigation.

Sudoku

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

from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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

ARABIC QUESTION OF THE DAY

Do you need help? it reed moosah-AA-deh?