

# A'am al-Bina'a

**"The year of 2008 will be a year of reconstruction for Iraq"**  
-- Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki



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## 3,000 Iraqis graduate Kirkuk police training

*New graduates will help provide security and stability in Kirkuk*

Three thousand Iraqis, including 58 females, joined the ranks of the Kirkuk police force during a graduation ceremony held at the Kirkuk Police Academy, Sept. 23.

"This is a historic event for the people of the Kirkuk Province," said Maj. Gen. Jamal Thaker Baker, provincial police chief, referring to the unprecedented number of male and female recruits graduating. "This is the direct result of the combined efforts of our Coalition friends and the Ministry of the Interior."

The police chief credited the recent gains in security throughout the province to this brotherhood whose main concern is for the people of the Tamim Province and providing "security and stability in this region for them." Jamal thanked God for the additional men and the inclusion of women to his police force.

Brigadier Gen. Kawa Garib Abdul-Rahman, commandant of the academy, said in closing that the sacrifices of the police force's martyrs would never be forgotten and their dedication to maintaining peace and security in the province would continue through the efforts of those men and women graduating.

"These new graduates will be able to provide security and stability to the country," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling.



A Kirkuk Police Academy honor guard prepares to pass-in-review during a graduation ceremony held Sept. 23. An unprecedented class will fill positions throughout the Tamim Province in northeastern Iraq.



A Kirkuk Police Academy instructor helps prepare female recruits for the graduation ceremony Sept. 23. Fifty-eight females were among an unprecedented graduating class numbering about 3,000.



## ***Iraqi Army takes full control of ammo depot***

The Iraqi Army took full control of the Bayji National Ammunition Depot from Coalition Forces during a turn-over ceremony Sept. 29.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar turned over the golden key to Iraqi Brig. Gen. Mohammed Ali Madlom to mark the event.

"This is a historic day, the day we receive full responsibility," said Gen. Madlom. "It's an honor for me, and we thank our coalition friends for the supplies and equipment needed for the Army to perform their duties."

The depot is the centerpiece of the national strategic ammunition supply to the Iraqi Army. It is the largest remaining depot with more than 1,400 storage locations housing more than 250 million rounds of ammunition that will increase combat capability.

Passing full operational control to the Iraqi Army also raises morale for the soldiers.

"The progress increases Iraqi soldier confidence," said Brig. Gen. Sahel, the Bayji National Ammunition Depot commander. "They work with higher spirits knowing they can manage it themselves."

Coalition Forces partnered with the Ministry of Defense to convert two warehouses into billeting for personnel, fully fund the equipment required to conduct the mission and maintain security of the complex, explained U.S. Navy Cmdr. Pete Bachand. "This was a true team effort made possible by daily interaction with our Iraqi counterparts within the Joint Headquarters, as well as with (various Coalition commands)" said Bachand.



**U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar turned over the symbolic golden key to Iraqi Brig. Gen. Mohammed Ali Madlom giving the Iraqi Army full control of the Bayji National Ammunition Depot.**

## **Regional courthouse construction completed in Basrah**



**Iraqi Judge Layth cuts the ribbon on the new Basrah Regional Courthouse signifying the handover of the facility from the U.S. Army to the Iraqi Ministry of Justice.**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Basrah Area Office handed over a new regional courthouse in Basrah Sept. 23. At a cost of over \$11 million, the Basrah Regional Courthouse is one of the largest projects undertaken by USACE.

U. S. Army Lt. Col. Humberto Ramirez represented the USACE at the ceremony signing the building over to the Iraqi Ministry of Justice. Judge Layth represented the Government of Iraq and cut the ribbon signifying the transfer of control of the site.

"There are a couple minor things left to do inside the building, but this project is [basically] complete," said Jim Mills, USACE project engineer for the construction. "That's why we are able to hand it over to the Iraqi government today."



# Championship match closes Rashid Olympics

The Rashid Olympics in southern Baghdad came to an end as more than 330 teams from 14 neighborhoods competed in friendly soccer games this summer.

The Rashid District Sports and Youth Committee hosted the championship soccer match and closing ceremony Sept. 9 at the Jaza'ir Oil Refinery Soccer Field to pit the champions of East and West Rashid against each other in the contest to crown a winner and relish the success of the district's first sports program since the war began.

A team from eastern Rashid Abu T'shir earned a hard-fought 3-1 victory over the team from Risalah in a spirited match that represented the zenith of more than four months of youth soccer this summer.

U.S. Army Capt. Thao Reed worked as the special projects manager for the Rashid Olympics and served in an advisory capacity for the project, which engaged approximately 10,000 Iraqi boys and girls. Reed said she believes the project empowered the local Iraqi governance to help return a sense of normalcy to the communities of Baghdad.

"When children are playing sports, there is an implied situation that means security is present – the reality of kids playing, letting our kids play on the ground, play on the streets – provides the youth and the Iraqi family a sense of normalcy," said Reed.

Reed worked closely with Mr. Habeeb Lefta, the Rashid District Youth and Sports Program director.

"It takes a lot of coordination, a lot of planning, a lot of teamwork from the local government, neighborhood and community leadership and Coalition Forces," said Reed.

Coalition Forces, working with the U.S. State Department, provided the uniforms and soccer balls for the program. U.S. Engineers renovated 14 soccer fields and are constructing two gymnasiums in Rashid.

A notable milestone is the start of the Girls Youth Sports Program in Rashid. Working with community leaders, Reed helped to ensure the girls were included. They competed in both volleyball and basketball tournaments. Reed also worked with families, who were concerned about their girls' safety and security.

"That was a big issue, so we had to involve the teach-



**The winners of the Rashid Olympics Soccer Tournament, the community of Abu T'shir, proudly raise their 1st Place Trophy Sept. 9 at the Jaza'ir Oil Refinery Soccer Field located in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad. Approximately 10,000 Iraqi children representing 14 communities in Rashid participated in the event.**



**Two soccer players from the Rashid district of southern Baghdad chase after the ball during the final match of the Rashid Olympics Sept. 9 at the Jaza'ir Oil Refinery Soccer Field.**

ers, the school administration and the MoE," Reed explained. "It was a very intensive program, even though there were only about 100 girls participating this summer; it was an enormous step."

Due to the success of the program, the local governance plans to expand the girls' program to include approximately 2,000 female participants from across the Rashid district, Reed explained. The bottom line for the summer youth sports program is the security.

A little more than a year ago, it would have been very difficult to get Iraqis from East and West Rashid to come together to play each other in a friendly soccer game, she concluded.

## Iraqi NP and U.S. Soldiers clear Baghdad streets of concertina

Iraqi National Policemen and U.S. Army Soldiers took to the streets and removed concertina wire Sept. 18 in the 9 Nissan district of eastern Baghdad.

The combined forces sheared their way through various areas in Beladiyat clearing unwanted concertina wire, collecting it and then loading it on to waiting trucks.

One of the primary reasons the combined patrol removed the wire is because it led to a large trash build-up, said Iraqi NP Command Sgt. Maj. Ali Mahdi Muhammad.

In addition to collecting trash, the wire provided areas for militant criminals to plant improvised-explosive devices, he said.

A lot of the wire sections are remnants previous units left behind, said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Stuart Sword. Removing the wire improves the

overall appearance of the Beladiyat area. Feedback from area residents has been positive.

"The people are really happy about it," said Muhammad. "It's a sign of progress for the people."

Seeing the wire come down has brought a level of reassurance to the people in the community that things are getting better, he said. It helps make the people feel safer.

Gaining the trust of the Iraqi people, Sword said, is one of the reasons for their success, and their efforts in removing the concertina wire shows they care about the people in the local communities.

**RIGHT: An Iraqi National Policeman gathers wire for removal Sept. 18 in the 9 Nissan district, eastern Baghdad. U.S. Army Soldiers joined National Policeman in their effort to clean up areas of Beladiyat neighborhoods.**



**A National Policeman uses wire cutters to help cleanup concertina wire in the 9 Nissan district, Baghdad.**



## Iraqi Air Force training schools graduate 291 new Airmen

*Airmen graduate from basic military, communications, and technical courses*



**Iraqi Air Force graduates render honors to Iraqi Gen. Kamal, Iraqi Air Force commanding general and U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. (S) Brooks Bash, in a pass-in-review ceremony during their graduation at the Iraqi Air Force Training School in Taji, Sept. 29.**

The Iraqi Air Force Training School held a combined Warrant Officer Graduation ceremony on Sept. 29. Two-hundred-ninety-one Airmen completed courses in basic military and technical training at the Air Force Training School, and communications training from the Iraqi Army Signal School.

Iraqi Air Force Gen. Kamal and U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. (S) Bash attended.

"This is your first step to a brighter future," said Kamal to the new graduates. "You are now part of the Iraqi Air Force family."

The courses are approximately 60 days and focus on basic military training, basic aircraft maintenance and technical training, professional military education and basic com-

munication technical training.

The Warrant Officers trained at the Taji Iraqi Air Force Training School and received instruction from Iraqi Air Force school instructors. The candidates who attended the Iraqi Army Signal School are the first group of commissioned Signal Warrant Officers for the new Iraqi Air Force.

"Our number one priority for the Iraqi Air Force is to help them grow a force that is capable of fighting and winning the counter-insurgency fight in Iraq," said Bash.

After the Warrant Officer Basic Military Training course, the graduates will continue their training in advanced aircraft maintenance and communications, also taught in Taji.