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Iraqis clean canals for improved water distribution



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson

(Above) Local Iraqi workers clean out one of the canals on the 250-kilometer Hahwar canal system recently. This effort was part of a project aimed at improving water distribution to over 59,000 acres crop land in Wasit Province. (Left) A local Iraqi worker removes vegetation clogging a canal, preventing water flow from reaching the end of the Hahwar canal system.



SGT. 1ST CLASS JOE THOMPSON
41ST FB



FOB DELTA – Local Iraqis are cleaning the 250-kilometer Hahwar canal system to improve the distribution of water from the Tigris River to southwest Wasit Province.

The canal system provides water to 240,000 donums (59,000 acres) of

crop land, roughly 10 percent of the arable land in Wasit, which is home to over 2,000 farmers.

“It’s been almost two years since the canals were cleaned and it was a government project,” said Ahmed Abed Alwaaly, the contractor in charge of the project. “This project is better.”

The \$378,000 canal cleaning project

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CANALS: Iraqis clean canals for improved water distribution

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is funded by the Iraqi Commander's Emergency Response Program and was implemented by the 41st Fires Brigade Civil Affairs Team in conjunction with the Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team's agricultural advisor.

"This project is combined with the Hahwar pumping station project, which is a 1.7 million dollar ICERP project," said Col. Richard Francey, 41st Fires Bde. Commander. "It will be interesting to see how far out we can get the water with these two projects."

"The people here will be very happy with this project because it will help a lot of farmers," said a local farmer to Francey. "A lot of people left this area because they were not making any money farming."

"Before 2003, a lot of the agricultural products for the province came from this area", said Ahmed. "The people here are very poor, but they have big hearts."

The canal cleaning project employs over 300 people a day with workers hired from local communities supported by the canal system. The canal cleaning project is scheduled to run for six weeks and the pumping station project has a projected completion date of Sept. 2009.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson

Local Iraqi workers pile vegetation into a wheelbarrow that was removed from canals in the 250-kilometer Hahwar canal system recently. This effort was part of a six-week project aimed at improving water distribution to over 59,000 acres of crop land in Wasit Province.



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 4th BCT, 1st Cavalry Division
 41st Fires Brigade
 343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
 793rd Military Police Battalion
 Division Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div.
 Task Force 449



SMA visits MND-C Soldiers and enlisted leadership



Photos by Spc. Darryl Lee Montgomery

(Left) Pvt. 1st Class Stephanie Lawson, Multinational Division – Center, D Company, 2/44 Air Defense Artillery, Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar administration clerk, talks to Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston about her accomplishments with the Army Physical Fitness Test. Lawson was chosen to present her unit's coin to Preston for raising her APFT score to 299. Preston followed by presenting Lawson with his coin for her efforts. (Below) Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston talks to Soldiers about the progress of their mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom here March 24 as Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore, Multinational Division – Center, Division command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Tyrone Smoot, MND – C, Division Special Troops Battalion command sergeant major, listen. Preston visited many different locations that form MND-C on March 24 to see the progress of noncommissioned officers and enlisted Soldiers, and to inform them of what is being done to improve their way of life in the Army in the near future.



Staff Section Round-up

G1 Corner: Overseas Service Ribbon

AM I AUTHORIZED THE OVERSEAS SERVICE RIBBON FOR THIS DEPLOYMENT?

Many Soldiers have asked questions about the Overseas Service Ribbon (OSR). Here are several questions and answers that will clarify any confusion in regards to the OSR.

Question 1: Can I be awarded the OSR for being in Iraq?

Answer 1: Soldiers are authorized to be awarded the OSR upon completion of a "normal overseas tour as IAW AR 614-30." If a Soldier is credited with tour completion for serving in Iraq, yes they can receive the OSR.

Question 2: How long do I have to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan to be awarded the OSR?

Answer 2: Overseas tour credit is outlined in AR 614-30. Provided below is a clarification statement the proponent to AR 614-30 has provided our office:

"Soldiers who serve a minimum of 11 cumulative months or 9 continuous months in a TCS/TDY status get credit for a completed short tour. Your reference is AR 614-30 (12 Aug 08), Table 3-2, rules 5 and 8. Iraq and Afghanistan are considered isolated areas where tour lengths have not been established by DOD; therefore, the Army gives equivalent credit for periods of TCS/TDY. Also, since there is no official established DOD tour length, Soldiers cannot serve in Iraq in PCS status. To determine the overseas tour lengths refer to Table 1, Appendix Q, Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR), Volume 1. You will not find a tour length for Afghanistan or Iraq."

Question 3: Just noticed the change to the OSR criteria where the rule which prohibited the OSR being awarded if another campaign/service medal was given was rescinded. Is this

change retroactive?

Answer 3: Since the policy was eliminated, Soldiers who have received "normal overseas tour credit" for past deployments to designated areas IAW AR 614-30 may now have their records updated with the OSR.

Question 4: I deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan from an OCONUS duty station. Am I authorized the OSR for my OCONUS tour and for my tour in Iraq or Afghanistan?

Answer 4: Overseas tour credit is outlined in AR 614-30. Provided below is a clarification statement the



proponent to AR 614-30 has provided our office: "When a Soldier is serving OCONUS on a prescribed tour and is deployed on TDY/TCS the original prescribed tour is not interrupted. Soldier can get credit for two tours."

Question 5: I am a Reserve Component Soldier mobilized onto active duty. I deployed to Iraq for 12 consecutive months. Am I authorized normal overseas tour credit and award of the OSR?

Answer 5: Overseas tour credit is outlined in AR 614-30. If you are given credit, yes you are authorized the OSR. Provided below is a clarification statement the proponent to AR 614-30 has provided our office:

"AR 614-30 indicates that various categories of Reserve Component (ARNG and USAR) Soldiers serving on Active Duty (e.g., AGR, Mobilized, Extended Active Duty) are subject to the provisions of the Regulation. Consequently, if subject to the provisions of AR 614-30 these RC Soldiers would be

eligible for tour credit if they met the provisions of Table 3-2, AR 614-30. The posting of their records would be in accordance with the provisions of AR 600-8-14."

Question 6: It appears that in every situation, the OSR is only authorized if a Soldier is credited with completion of an overseas tour. Who determines if an overseas tour was completed and ensures the Soldier's records is posted to reflect the completion of the tour?

Answer 6: The custodian of a Soldier's personnel records makes the determination, IAW the rules established in AR 614-30, and posts the completed overseas tours to the Soldier's record. If you are unsure who your records custodian is, check with your S1, they will know.

Question 7: Wear of Numerals on the OSR. If a Soldier has served/completed 6 overseas assignments...would he use the numeral 6 on the OSR?

Answer 7: Yes. IAW paragraph 6-4, AR 600-8-22, the ribbon denotes the first award and numerals starting with the numeral "2" denote the number of additional awards.

Question 8: 2/3 Tour Rule: I have been told that you are authorized your OSR at the completion of 2/3 of your tour. Is this true?

Answer 8: The 2/3 rule you refer to does not exist. The OSR is only authorized if the Soldier is awarded "normal overseas tour credit" IAW AR 614-30. You should refer to Table 3-2 and Table 3-3, AR 614-30 for rules on granting completion of a successful overseas tour.

For further information and guidance, please refer to your S-1's and the regulatory guidance referenced in this article.

SSG Brown, Clifton
10th MTN DIV (LI) G1 Awards NCOIC

Headline Round-up

World News:

BEIJING (AP) — China is calling for a new global currency to replace the dominant dollar, showing a growing assertiveness on revamping the world economy ahead of next week's London summit on the financial crisis. The surprise proposal by Beijing's central bank governor reflects unease about its vast holdings of U.S. government bonds and adds to Chinese pressure to overhaul a global financial system dominated by the dollar and Western governments. Both the United States and the European Union brushed off the idea. The world economic crisis shows the "inherent vulnerabilities and systemic risks in the existing international monetary system," Gov. Zhou Xiaochuan said in an essay released Monday by the bank. He recommended creating a currency made up of a basket of global currencies and controlled by the International Monetary Fund and said it would help "to achieve the objective of safeguarding global economic and financial stability."

U.S. News:

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Surgeons have transplanted a hand onto a Marine who was hurt in a training accident, and he has some movement in his fingers, according to the hospital where the operation occurred. The surgery was performed at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center by a team headed by Dr. W.P. Andrew Lee on March 14-15. The hospital is not releasing the 24-year-old's identity or details of how he lost his right hand, but hopes to hold a news conference next week. "For a hand, it takes quite some time to get full movement," said spokeswoman Amy Dugas Rose. "He has some movement, which is a good sign."

Odd News:

SOUTHINGTON, Conn. - A Hollywood horror film that depicts the alleged haunting of a former funeral parlor in central Connecticut is turning into a nightmare for the home's current owners and their neighbors. The movie, "A Haunting in Connecticut," doesn't open until Friday, but curious fans are already making a beeline for the Southington home that inspired the movie. "It's just been really, really stressful," said Susan Trotta-Smith, who bought the home 10 years ago. "It's been a total change from a very quiet house in a very quiet neighborhood to looking out the window and seeing cars stopping all the time. It's been very, very stressful, and sometimes worrisome."

Quote of the Day

"It is a mistake to think you can solve any major problems just with potatoes." - Douglas Adams

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For the
answer to
today's puzzle,
go to:



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Fishbowl Gym

March 27

Relay for Life HOPE Ceremony
@ 8 p.m.

March 28

Cancer awareness 5K/10K walk
run. Free t-shirt and
continental breakfast. Race
begins @ 7 a.m.

April 11

Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K.

Registration begins @ 7 a.m.,
race begins @ 8 a.m.
T-shirts awarded to top
finishers.

Freedom Chapel

Sundays

Protestant (Traditional) @ 10
a.m.

Roman Catholic Mass @ 12 p.m.

LDS service @ 2 p.m.

Eastern Orthodox @ 4 p.m.

Protestant (Contemporary) @ 12
p.m.

Mondays

A History of Christianity @
7 p.m.

Tuesdays

God & the Military @ 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

Guitar Lessons @ 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Catholic Choir practice @ 5:30
p.m.

Fridays

Catholic hour @ 6:30 p.m.