



# THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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# IA's 'Quiet Professionals'

**FOB DELTA** — A platoon of Iraqi Army scouts took part in a live-fire exercise last week designed to simulate a raid and pursuit of a terrorist target in an urban environment.

U.S. Soldiers from Operational Detachment Alpha 7236 trained the IA scouts and supervised the exercise.

"In six years of training with (American) Special Forces, we have never done training like we did today," said the commander of the Scout Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division.

The training exercised the movement techniques the scouts have learned and updated their skills with the newest training, he added.

"They did fairly well," said the U.S. Advisor from ODA 7236 in charge of the training. "This is what we built up to with two months of training, and I'm very pleased. They have improved a million times over.

"We've instilled the idea of being special," he added. "They want to be here and are very motivated and ready to train."

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An Iraqi Army scout fires from cover during a live-fire exercise designed to simulate a raid and pursuit of a terrorist target in an urban environment on Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq, July 15. Photo by Sgt. Daniel West.

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## Iraqi SWAT Air Assault Nets Six

**SALAH AD DIN PROVINCE** — Whooping and whistling like children on a roller coaster ride, Iraqi Police soared through the sun-soaked July sky on their way home from a successful mission. Their enthusiasm was not borne of the high-speed helicopter ride, but of the hard day's work, which helped save the lives of countless Iraqi citizens.

In the predawn hours of July 12, Iraqi Police, along with Soldiers from the 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, conducted an air assault into the arid

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Cpl. Chris Sarlo, a rifleman with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, receives a 'thumbs up' from young citizen in Ramadi, once-considered the most violent city in Iraq. Photo by Lance Cpl. Casey Jones.

## Same City, New Outlook

**RAMADI** — A mostly Sunni city with about 500,000 residents, Ramadi was considered to be one of the most violent cities in the world during the early part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Today, locals are out shopping at the city's bustling marketplace, known as the souk. Children are playing soccer in fields, and students are walking mostly worry-free to and from the province's local college, al Anbar University.

The signs of war have steadily declined as the city has embraced peace and the region is returning to normalcy, which is an unexpected but welcome change for Marines with 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, returning to the region for consecutive tours.

"A lot of the action happened in Ra-

radi," said Cpl. Abdias Betancourth Jr., a 23-year-old motor transportation operator from Toppenish, Wash., with 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1. "We had it all here - improvised explosive devices, small arms fire, rockets, almost every type of attack."

The city of Ramadi endured some of the toughest fighting between 2004 and 2006, and the Marines expected intense combat while preparing for their deployments to the region.

"We had an idea of what we were going into just from all of the storylines and news coverage," said 1st Sgt. Patrick J. Dostal, the Headquarters and Service Company first sergeant with 1st Battalion,

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## Economic Programs Boost Iraqi Payrolls

**BAGHDAD** — Two U.S.-military sponsored economic reconstruction programs are helping to put thousands of Iraqi citizens into productive jobs while boosting the country's business activity, a senior U.S. military officer posted in Iraq said July 16.

In March 2007, Army Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of Multinational Force Iraq, directed his officers to find ways to provide jobs and increased opportunities for economic expansion, entrepreneurship and skills training for the people of Iraq, recalled Army Maj. Gen. Timothy McHale, director of personnel, logistics and resources for Multinational Force Iraq.

The successful Iraqi First LOG-CAP and Iraqi-Based Industrial Zone programs are direct results of Petraeus' directive, McHale said.

"Both of these programs are focused on contributing to Iraq's economic progress and security," McHale pointed out.

The Iraqi First LOGCAP program provides a conduit for Iraqi businesses to sell their products and services to coalition customers, McHale explained.

"We are striving to put Iraqis first in

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## Basra Could Become Another Dubai, Says Commander

**WASHINGTON** — Security progress in Basra is "overwhelming" and Iraq's second-largest city could be "another Dubai in the coming decade," the commander of Multi-National Division - Southeast said July 14, referring to the bustling international business hub.

British Army Maj. Gen. Barney White-Spunner told Pentagon reporters via teleconference from Baghdad that Operation Charge of the Knights - ordered by Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in March - has "well and truly" turned the tide in the

city.

Before the operation, militias controlled large parts of the city. Militia leaders, many under control of Iran, intimidated the populace and turned the city into a crime empire.

Basra is key to Iraq's success, with oil fields, the port of Umm Qasr and the international airport being economic engines for the region, White-Spunner said.

Since Operation Charge of the Knights began, Iraqi Security Forces have reas-

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An Iraqi man smiles as he drives by in the neighborhood of Hayy Al Asdiqa, Basra, Iraq, last month. Photo by Sgt. Tim Ortez.