

ESSAYONS

Forward



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division, Iraq - Volume 5, Issue 11

December 2008

BUILDING STRONG SM



تصفح المقالات العربية

- **Iraqi villagers anticipate clean water for first time**
- **New courthouse taking shape, bolstering Babil's 'rule of law'**
- **Sports club in Basra source of local pride**
- **School upgrade equals better learning**

ESSAYONS *Forward*

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INSIDE this issue

December 2008, Volume 5, Issue 11

| | |
|---|----|
| <i>Message from ME and From the desk of the CSM</i> | 3 |
| <i>Shatt al-Arab Courthouse enhances local rule of law</i> | 4 |
| <i>New courthouse taking shape, bolstering Babil's 'rule of law'</i> | 6 |
| <i>Air Force officer experiences 'joint' and 'multi-national' to the highest degree</i> | 7 |
| <i>Water treatment plant repairs and training offer long-term solution</i> | 8 |
| <i>Iraqi villagers anticipate clean water for first time</i> | 10 |
| <i>Army engineer sees significant progress in Iraq</i> | 11 |
| <i>Clean water a first for millions of Sadr City residents</i> | 12 |
| <i>Sports Club in Basra, source of local pride</i> | 14 |
| <i>Basra receives boost in clean water</i> | 15 |
| <i>School upgrade equals jobs, better learning environment</i> | 16 |
| <i>Amarah residents look forward to 'a breath of fresh air'</i> | 18 |
| <i>From the kindness of your hearts</i> | 19 |

On the cover:



Iraqi workers at the Qurmat Ali water facility near Basra. The \$9.5 million expansion project will increase the facility's capacity.

Merry Christmas!

Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre and Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Prater of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers serve lunch on Christmas Day at the dining facility in the International Zone, Baghdad.



Message from ME



You made it possible

As I look over the accomplishments GRD has made this past year, three words come to mind – awesome, energetic, pride!

This is an exciting time to be in Iraq, to be living and contributing to history. The reconstruction

successes we are witnessing are possible because YOU made them possible. Committed to helping meet the basic needs of the people of Iraq, the multi-national, multi-service GRD team has played a critical role in getting Iraq to where it is today. Electricity, clean water, sewage removal and medical facilities are no longer for the privileged few, but are now regularly available to so many more Iraqis.

Because of your efforts and the joint efforts of the Coalition Forces, U.S. Government and the Government of Iraq, the original plan to add 6,000 megawatts to the electrical grid was not only achieved but surpassed as 6,037 megawatts were generated on December 9. GRD was directly responsible for approximately 2,000 of those megawatts or 33 percent of the total generation increase and has another 20 electrical projects in progress--more power is on the way.

Because of your efforts, more people today receive healthcare treatment in Iraq. GRD has turned over 41 hospitals and 132 healthcare centers to the Ministry of Health. Each hospital is able to treat 6.6 million outpatients per year and each healthcare

clinic can support 4.6 million outpatients.

Because of your efforts, the people of Iraq now have access to safe potable water and the availability of properly operated sewage services, having a direct impact on the health of the people. Not only does clean water decrease the incidences of disease, it is important to agriculture and industry. Our increases in water treatment capacity directly impact more than 4.7 million people.

As the Coalition Forces begin to draw down, GRD's efforts will focus more on capacity development and operations, maintenance and sustainment programs. The key to long term success is training. Working with Iraqis, at all levels, GRD will provide training to enable its people to independently operate and maintain its infrastructure and facilities provided by the U.S. and GoI.

January 25th marks GRD's 5 year anniversary. Thousands of Civilians, Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen have selflessly committed to accomplishing the overall mission. Because of your efforts, we are building a brighter future for generations to come!

GRD is BUILDING STRONG™ foundations!

فرقة منطقة الخليج تبني اسساً قوية

Maj. Gen. Mike Eyre
Gulf Region Division
Commander

From the desk of the CSM



“Course of Irreversible Success”

We are set now on a course that is irreversible. With the Security Agreement now signed and the concept of the TransAtlantic Division now a reality, much change is in store for GRD. While all of this seems far away in the future, it is not.

Based on the Security Agreement and the transformation of the organization in theater all of these changes should occur in the current year of 2009.

So, uncertainty of the future is next to set in throughout the Command. But, we want you to know that the leadership will do all that we can to ensure that you are kept up to date on changes as they occur. Morale is one of my most important concerns. When people are uncertain of their future, morale tends to go into a lull. Everyone needs to know that we will make decisions with the best interests of the organization and its people as the heaviest factors possible. We are full participants in the Security Agreement and the transformation implementation processes and we will advocate for both our mission and our people.

Changes abound and it is a healthy thing. Continue to do what

you are doing and we will continue to be one of the most highly respected organizations in the theater, accomplishing the impossible each and every day. Since the inception of Theater Engineer Command - Iraq, all I can remember were the naysayers in the back of the room telling us what was impossible and what would never happen. Yet here we are today, doing the things that so many said were impossible.

In a note from Dwight Eisenhower to his senior military staff he wrote, “The best morale exists when you never hear the word mentioned.” Communication is the key. Talk to your supervisor's and most importantly share with your people and tell them what you know when you can.

I personally want to welcome all of the 416th Theater Engineer Command personnel to GRD. Welcome to the family and we look forward to all that you are going to do to provide your part of the huge success that GRD is.

ESSAYONS! Army Strong!
Command Sgt. Maj. Richard “Mitch” Prater
Gulf Region Division



The local Iraqi construction crew is making progress on the new Shatt al-Arab Courthouse in al-Tonoma, Basra Province.

Shatt al-Arab Courthouse enhances local rule of law

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

The people of al-Tanoma, a city east of Shatt al-Arab River, will soon open a new courthouse, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division.

When the new, modern facility is completed next spring, it will have a direct impact on the rule of law here, said Laith Abdul Sammad, the chief judge on the Basra Supreme Judiciary Council. This is one of more than 65 courthouse projects throughout Iraq providing a foundation for a strong judicial system; 55 are already complete.

Approximately 40 local Iraqis, including judges, clerks and security personnel, will work at the new facility when it opens next spring. That number is expected to grow once it's fully operational, said Sammad.

"I'm looking forward to seeing this project finished because the 27-year-old existing facility in Al Tanoma is not sufficient for the 120,000 residents of the area," he explained. "The new courthouse will serve as the central pillar for a fair judicial process, strengthening the community's pursuit of peace and justice," he added.

The Iraqi firm building the \$1.4 million courthouse is making good progress and the project is 54 percent complete, said Iraqi Engineer Al, the Deputy Area Engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "Currently the 30 local Iraqis on the construction crew are plastering the interior and exterior walls and installing the main

electrical panel and wiring," he noted.

The 588-sq.-meter three-story courthouse compound will feature parking lots, an administrative checkpoint and two gardens, Sammad said. "The local Iraqi crew is taking pride in the work, and the Chief Judge is pleased with the construction quality he's seeing," he added.



Iraqi electrician installing wiring in the \$1.4 million courthouse.

محكمة شط العرب لتطبيق سيادة القانون محليا

بقلم البحراني
قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج

من المشروع بحسب مساعد المهندس المسؤول عن هذه المنطقة، الذي يعمل لدى فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي. وأضاف "حاليا، يعكف ٣٠ عاملا عراقيا على اكساء الجدران من الداخل والخارج، وينصبون لوحة الكهرباء الرئيسية ويوصلون الأسلاك". وسيضم مجمع المحكمة التي تبلغ مساحتها ٥٨٨ مترا مربعا وتتألف من ثلاثة طوابق مرائب للسيارات ونقطة تفتيش ادارية وحديقتين، بحسب المهندس. وأضاف "الطاقم العراقي يفخرون بالعمل وكبير القضاة مسرور بجودة أعمال البناء".

أعمال البناء فيها في الربيع المقبل نحو ٤٠ شخصا، ضمنهم قضاة وموظفون ورجال أمن، وهذا الرقم مرشح للزيادة عند عمل المحكمة بكامل جاهزيتها، بحسب رئيس القضاة. وقال "اتطلع لرؤية اكتمال هذا المشروع لان المحكمة الموجودة منذ ٢٧ عاما في التنمية لا تكفي سكان المنطقة البالغ عددهم ١٢٠ الف نسمة" وأضاف "ستكون المحكمة الجديدة ركيزة أساسية لعملية قضائية عادلة، ما يدعم سعي المجتمع الى السلام والعدالة". وتحرز الشركة العراقية التي تبني المحكمة تقدما جيدا، وتم انجاز ٥٤ بالمائة

سيحصل سكان التنمية التي تقع في الضفة الشرقية لشط العرب في البصرة، على محكمة بتكلفة ١،٤ مليون دولار سيتم افتتاحها قريبا بمساعدة فرقة منطقة الخليج التابعة لفيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي. وسوف يكون للمحكمة تأثير مباشر في سيادة القانون بالبصرة عندما يكتمل بناؤها في الربيع المقبل، بحسب رئيس القضاة في مجلس القضاء الأعلى بالبصرة. والمشروع واحد من نحو ٦٥ مشروع محكمة في جميع أرجاء العراق، وتم انجاز ٥٥ مشروعا منها، من اجل توفير أساس قوي للنظام القضائي في البلاد. وسوف يعمل في المحكمة حال انتهاء



عاملان عراقيان يقطعان حديد التسليح في مشروع محكمة شط العرب في التنمية بمحافظة البصرة بتكلفة ١،٤ مليون دولار.



Hillah Regional Courthouse's plaza will feature fountains with service buildings also part of the plan.

New courthouse taking shape, bolstering Babil's 'rule of law'

BY ALICIA EMBREY
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A new regional courthouse is taking shape to help Babil Province enforce the rule of law. The new \$7 million facility is scheduled to be complete next spring.

“The Iraqi judiciary has a long and proud history going back before the founding of the country itself,” said Mark Robbins, Rule of Law advisor with the Babil Provincial Reconstruction Team. “For the most part, the judiciary in Babil enjoys the respect of the people. But many years of neglect under the previous regime has left it with a crumbling infrastructure and inadequate facilities to meet the rule of law needs of the local population,” he noted.

The construction of a new regional courthouse and upgrades to the previous facility have been complicated, Robbins said. But the PRT has remained committed to it. “We look forward to working with the Babil judiciary to ensure that it will soon work in a facility that better reflects the honor and respect of the Iraqi judiciary” he added.

Babil Resident Engineer Jun Morales with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says the new 35,000 sq. ft. multi-story courthouse will consist of the main office building and adjoining

service buildings (cafeteria, guard houses and bathrooms), two fountains, public and employee park areas. “All buildings will have air conditioning, potable water and intercom systems. The older Al Hillah courthouse, the Municipal Court, will receive a facelift and security upgrades,” Morales said. Throughout Iraq, USACE has completed 55 courthouse projects with an additional 11 ongoing with an additional 11 ongoing.

Babil, south of Baghdad, became the 12th of Iraq's 18 provinces to take the lead for its own security operations in October. “The Regional Courthouse is an expansion of their judicial system and a symbol of a new phase within the government,” Morales added. “It's a key institution in the community's quest for law and order.”

This project is also creating jobs. Approximately 100 Iraqis are involved with the construction each day. Currently, nearly 100 judges and prosecutors, 175 employees, and almost 200 judicial police and security guards are working at the older Municipal Courthouse. Approximately 450 lawyers also use the existing facility. After the new courthouse complex opens, those numbers are expected to eventually increase.

Air Force officer experiences 'joint' and 'multi-national' to the highest degree

BY JOHN CONNOR
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers fields a diverse team in Iraq, including many representatives from other services, such as Maj. Dee J. Katzer of the U.S. Air Force.

For most of the past six months, Katzer has served as the Military Programs section chief for the Gulf Region South district, USACE's office covering reconstruction and related services in the nine southern provinces of Iraq.

In that capacity, Katzer leads a staff responsible for planning and executing many significant projects with a value of \$1.1 billion. He oversees the "cradle to grave" management of these high impact projects, working with numerous agencies to resolve issues to ensure each one meets the customer's expectations.

Katzer serves as the project manager for the first Foreign Military Sales Project that USACE is executing for the Government of Iraq, the new pier and seawall complex at Umm Qasr. "What makes it unique is that I'm an Air Force Officer managing an Iraqi Navy project for a U.S. Army organization—talk about joint and multi-national!" he exclaimed.

A 1995 graduate of the Air Force Academy, Katzer is an active duty officer assigned to the Air Force Civil Engineer Staff at the Pentagon. "There are four of us from the Civil Engineer Staff scattered throughout the Gulf Region Division," said Katzer, who will return to the Pentagon when his Iraq tour ends in December. Although currently residing in Virginia, Katzer and his family call Colorado home.

During his deployment, Katzer has traveled throughout most of southern Iraq and seen sights ranging from camel herds and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the Ziggurat, an ancient temple that he can view from his office window.

"Working for USACE has been a very unique experience since in the past I'd always been the customer, hounding the Corps to complete projects on time and under budget," he said. "Now I am on the team providing the service and giving the customer the quality they pay for," he continued.

As the first FMS initiative implemented by the Corps in Iraq, the \$52 million Umm Qasr project is being

closely watched by the Government of Iraq who is paying the bill. Its success could have long-term effects on future opportunities. The project is scheduled to be finished in September 2009. Katzer said a lot of additional FMS work is envisioned for USACE, as well.

Reflecting more broadly on the work done by the Corps of Engineers in Iraq, Katzer said: "It is obvious that we are making a difference when you see a completed water treatment unit and distribution system that provides drinking water for the first time ever to a local neighborhood. It is also obvious by

the friendly smiles and waves from the kids as we travel to different jobsites."

Katzer was impressed with the "wide diversity of civilians willing to come to Iraq and help out, including school teachers, park rangers, lock operators and private citizens who are career construction workers or managers."

He praised the people he's met as "consummate professionals," and said of the soldiers with whom he has traveled on occasion — "it was amazing — their focus, dedication and professionalism — especially considering that for many, it is their second or third tour in Iraq."



Maj. Dee J. Katzer (left) participates in a pre-construction meeting for the \$52 million pier and seawall complex to be built with Iraqi funds at Umm Qasr.



Water treatment plant repairs and training offer long-term solution

BY ALICIA EMBREY
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

An Iraqi crew's repairs to the water treatment plant in Musayib will ensure clean drinking water to 50,000 households in the area.

"After years of neglect, the facility is currently pumping water directly from the Euphrates River into the city's drinking water distribution system with little or no filtration," said Lt. Col. Michael Darrow with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "The only treatment that is being provided is chlorination. It is unregulated and insufficient to adequately treat the raw river water," he continued.

Nearly 35 Iraqi workers are on the crew rehabilitating the plant's major mechanical systems, with the goal of restoring its full design capacity of 2,160 cubic meters per hour. The \$1.6 million project is now 32 percent finished, Darrow said.

This is one of more than 600 water treatment or sewage projects in Iraq overseen by USACE, which have direct impact on the quality of life for nearly 5 million people.

In addition to the construction effort, there is also a mission to ensure that the Iraqis are trained and ready to operate the

plant on their own. The Babil Provincial Reconstruction Team and embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team supporting the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, are developing training programs to certify Iraqi operators.

Once the plant repairs are complete next spring, the staff will be ready to produce clean water and will know the proper maintenance requirements to avoid major breakdowns. "The intent is to offer a certification process similar to what the typical water treatment plant operator in the United States is required to go through," Darrow noted.

"We all recognize that operations and maintenance is one of Iraq's biggest challenges and that a priority needs to be placed on developing skills and abilities," said Maj. Kimberly Peeples, deputy team leader of the North Babil embedded PRT. "We are working hand-in-hand with the Babil water director general and the Babil PRT to identify a sustainable solution.

"We are committed to assisting the Iraqis take this important step," she concluded. "It will ensure Musayib families can count on clean water coming out of their taps for years to come."

اصلاح محطة معالجة مياه يعطي حلا بعيد المدى

بقلم أليشا امبراي
قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج

من شأن اصلاحات يجريها طاقم عراقي لمحطة معالجة المياه في المسيب ان تضمن تدفق المياه الصالحة للشرب الى ٥٠ الف نسمة من سكان المدينة.

وقال اللقنتانت كولونيل مايكل دارو الذي يعمل لدى فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي "بعد سنوات من الاهمال، تضخ المنشأة حاليا المياه مباشرة من نهر الفرات الى نظام توزيع المياه الصالحة للشرب في المدينة مع قليل او من دون تصفية" مضيفا "المعالجة الوحيدة التي تجرى هي بالكور، العملية غير منظمة وغير كافية لمعالجة مياه النهر".

ويتولى طاقم قوامه نحو ٣٥ عاملا عراقيا اعادة تأهيل الأنظمة الميكانيكية الرئيسة للمحطة، بهدف استعادة طاقتها التصميمية القصوى المقدرة بـ ٢١٦٠ مترا مكعبا في الساعة. وتم انجاز ٣٢ بالمائة من المشروع بتكلفة ١,٦ مليون دولار، بحسب دارو.

والمشروع واحد من أكثر من ٦٠٠ مشروع لمعالجة مياه الشرب أو المياه الثقيلة في العراق، يشرف عليها فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي، لها تأثير مباشر في معيشة نحو خمسة ملايين نسمة.

وفضلا عن جهود البناء، هناك مهمة تضمن تلقي العراقيين تدريبا للاستعداد لتشغيل المحطة بأنفسهم. حيث يساند فريق اعادة اعمار محافظة بابل اللواء القتالي الرابع وفرقة المشاة الثالثة في تطوير برامج تدريبية لمنح شهادات المشغلين العراقيين. وعندما تنتجز اصلاحات المحطة بحلول الخريف المقبل، سيكون الطاقم قادرا على ادارة عمل المحطة في تصفية المياه وسوف يكتسبون خبرات الصيانة الاصولية للحؤول دون حدوث عطل جسيم.

وقال دارو "نسعى لتقديم التدريب ثم منح شهادات انموذجية شبيهة بتلك التي يحتاجها مشغلو محطات معالجة المياه في الولايات المتحدة لكي يستطيعون مواصلة العمل".

من جهته، قال الميجور كمبرلي بيبلز مساعد قائد فريق اعادة اعمار محافظة بابل "نعلم جميعا أن العمليات وأعمال الصيانة هي من أكبر التحديات التي يواجهها العراق وان الأولوية تقتضي ان نركز على تطوير المهارات والقدرات".

وأضاف "نعمل يدا بيد مع مدير ماء بابل وفريق اعادة اعمار المحافظة للتوصل الى حل مساند" مضيفا "نحن ملتزمون مساعدة العراقيين في اتخاذ هذه الخطوة المهمة ... وذلك سيضمن حصول العائلات التي تسكن المسيب على مياه نظيفة تخرج من الصنابير لمدة أعوام مقبلة".

عمال يجرون اصلاحات لحوض بمحطة ماء المسيب لكي تستأنف التصفية بعد سنوات من التوقف.



Al-Shofa's 50-cubic-meter-per-hour water treatment facility is nearing completion in a rural area north of Nasiriyah in Thi Qar Province.

Iraqi villagers anticipate clean water for first time

BY NORRIS JONES
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Families in a small village north of Nasiriyah are anxiously awaiting the completion of a water treatment facility that will provide them a local source of clean drinking water for the first time ever.

Approximately 1500 residents live in the Al Shofa neighborhood, which will be served by the new 50-cubic-meter-per-hour facility. Dozens of Iraqis have been involved on the construction crew for the nearly \$350,000 project that includes 4 kilometers of a water distribution network. Among those getting access to the treated water is the local Al Qitab primary school and the 120 students attending classes there.

“Our community was pumping raw water out of a canal for household use. It was not good water,” explained headmaster Farage Jabbar Ali. “We are all very happy to see this project nearing completion.” USACE has completed more than 830 other water projects in Iraq and nearly 80 more are ongoing.

The work is being overseen by Navy Cdr. Terry Hart with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “Everyone we talk to there has been very supportive,” he noted.

The project began a year ago and should be finished next month. It includes an intake structure, 50-cubic-meter elevated storage tank, operations building, chemical and storage building, back-up electrical generator, and a perimeter wall. Cdr. Hart's staff is overseeing the construction of 15 water treatment plants in Thi Qar Province.

“This is what it's all about – helping people. I'm pleased to be part of this effort providing Iraqi families access to a

fundamental necessity. They're delighted to see it taking shape and grateful for what we're doing,” said Hart, a Naval Reservist from Frankenmuth, Mich.

“We're making a difference. This project lets them know their government is working and things are getting better,” she said.



Students at al-Qitab school will soon benefit from a new water treatment facility under construction in their community, which will offer the area clean water for the first time ever.



Army engineer sees significant progress in Iraq

BY JOHN CONNOR
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Lt. Col. Mike Darrow, serving two tours in Iraq with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, says he's seen real progress during the past five years.

He says the biggest change is that Iraqis are now making decisions and allocating their own resources to improve essential services for local residents. In 2003, Darrow had a 6-person Forward Engineer Support Team, and was responsible for making assessments and immediate renovations to get key ministry facilities back up and functioning in Iraq's four southern provinces. During that assignment, he hired the first Iraqi engineers in southern Iraq - a total of 12.

"Most are still employed by Gulf Region Division's district in southern Iraq, which oversees projects in Iraq's nine southern provinces and now has a total of 140 Iraqi engineers on its staff," he noted.

A memorable moment during Darrow's

second tour came on his first day, when he met one of the Iraqi engineers he hired in 2003. "I knew the first tour had made a difference and that I had an opportunity this time to build on those efforts," he said. "This has been a great tour."

Darrow, who - at home - serves as deputy commander of the Corps' Norfolk District office, has played a central role during his two tours in incorporating Iraqi engineers into USACE's Iraq reconstruction efforts and expanding their presence and the scope of their duties. Darrow set up his district's first all-Iraqi Resident Office in North Babil, and hired more full-time Iraqi engineers in Qadisiyah and Wasit, as part of a major USACE effort to build capability and prepare Iraqis to manage and maintain all of the infrastructure after the U.S. withdraws from Iraq.

While upbeat about progress in Iraq,

Darrow acknowledges that formidable challenges remain. These include assuring the operations and maintenance of completed projects. "We build it, but there are few trained individuals and limited Iraqi funds set aside to do the routine maintenance to sustain things like water treatment plants," he said.

As head of the Forat Area Office, Darrow oversees projects in Babil, Karbala, Najaf, Qadisiyah, and Wasit provinces. His staff is responsible for 58 active construction projects valued at \$175 million with an additional \$142 million worth of projects either in the pipeline or in the "concept" stage.

The planned projects include four small water treatment units, costing \$1.4 million each, in Babil Province, which are funded by the Government of Iraq. That transition to the overnment allocating its

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

own resources to improve essential services throughout the country is a trend that shows significant progress, Darrow said.

Among other projects underway is a \$25 million electrical substation in Qadisiyah Province and a job at Kufa University in Najaf that includes the completion of electrical and mechanical engineering buildings that were under construction at the beginning of the war.

Darrow counts the rehabilitation of the Iskandariyah Vocational-Technical School as among the most noteworthy projects with which he has been involved. The job is renovating seven dorms, a classroom

building and an auditorium at a cost of \$4.3 million. "The contractor massed efforts, had over 200 workers per day on the site, and is set to finish three-to-four months ahead of schedule - a feat unheard of with the typical Iraqi contractor,"

Darrow said. Most importantly, the contractor has hired more than 50 Votech graduates to help with the work, building on their new skills and shrinking the unemployed ranks from which the insurgency might draw. When the renovations began, the school was offering only a couple classes for an enrollment of 30 students -- next year Iskandariyah Votech is expected to train 4,000 students in a variety of occupational specialties including masonry, electrical, carpentry, welding, computers, and auto mechanics.

On the basis of his two tours in Iraq, Darrow has concluded that considerable benefits can be gained by USACE civilians serving in Iraq. "I would recommend that every USACE civilian do at least a six-month tour," he said. "It allows everyone to be challenged, learn new things, and professionally develop. People leaving here know they've made a difference."

Darrow, who will return to the Norfolk District when he completes his six-month tour in December, is married and the father of three children. A native of Cleveland, N.Y., he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in civil and environmental engineering from Clarkson University and a Masters Degree in environmental engineering from Cornell University.



The orange pipes outside the filtration building carry backwash water to keep the filters clean.

Clean water a first for millions of Sadr City residents

BY KENDAL SMITH
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

"I am very happy for the 2 million people of Sadr City. I have been working here at the R-3 Water Treatment Plant for more than three years, since the start of the project. It's the first in Iraq, fully automatic and with American standards of best quality. We meet the people in the streets of Sadr City and they are very happy. They feel that we are interested in them and their health. We are very proud of the success of this project," said Iraqi Engineer Aqeel Lami of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The \$27 million Sadr City R-3 Water Treatment Plant construction originally began in 2005 as a United States Agency for International Development contract. It was handed over to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division in July 2007 to finish the remaining 15 percent.

"The plant location came as a result of a government study on



Lt. Col. Marshall Banks, right and Col. Ronald Light inspect the Sadr al-Qana'at Pump Station on the Tigris River.

water pressure and supply,” said USACE water expert, Simeon Francis, who has been with the plant as a technical expert from its beginning with USAID. “There is simply not enough water to Sadr City from the Kharkh and Shark-Dijilih Water Treatment Plants for the area.” Experts decided to add a plant on the northern fringe of Sadr City to remedy that, he said.

The plant began operation in mid-June with some interruptions due to power restrictions, but today, R-3 produces 4,000 cubic meters of treated water per hour into the distribution system through a 1.2 meter outlet line. It is currently providing 27 sectors in Sadr City with clean potable water - sectors that historically have had no centrally distributed water. With the plant at full capacity as of September 27, 2008, a performance test in October confirmed the quality of the daily output of 96,000 cubic meters per day (about 25 million gallons

per day). That output equates to clean, quality water for a total of 1.5 million people in Sadr City and Baghdad, Francis said.

“Operating at full capacity, the R-3 Water Treatment Plant drastically increases the potable water to the people of Sadr City. The plant is operating at 100 percent capacity right now. It’s a great success story for USACE,” said project engineer Roland Belew.

The plant will employ 150 people for operations, maintenance and management, Belew explained.

“This project is special to me,” concluded Francis, “because I’ve been here from the beginning, and I am here for the end of it. It is really something to see the clear water sample from R-3’s output. I know what the raw water is like from the Tigris and to be able to look at the R-3 water and see nothing but water is very gratifying,” he concluded.

“The rehabilitation work for the four decades old facility is an important step to meeting the needs of Basra's next generation of athletes.

Lateef Khlaf,
the sports club
club
administrator

The Shatt al-Arab Stadium in Basra is undergoing a \$300,000 renovation to modernize the facility.



Sports Club in Basra, source of local pride

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Hundreds of Iraqis in al-Tanoma city in east Basra will soon have access to a modern sports club where they can host and watch sporting events. The project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is designed to provide a safe haven for youth to play, practice and develop their skills.

“The rehabilitation work for the four decades old facility is an important step to meeting the needs of Basra's next generation of athletes,” said Lateef Khlaf, the sports club administrator. “As you know, the Iraqi people love sports like soccer and basketball. They will be very pleased with the new changes taking place here.” He pointed out that currently about 750 Iraqis have memberships at the facility. “It will showcase local sports in Tanoma and its 240,000 residents.”

The \$300,000 project includes renovating existing facilities

with electrical, mechanical and civil repairs, installing a rubberized surface on the existing playing court, building new sun shades, a boundary wall, two locker rooms, showers, and two restrooms.

Iraqi engineer Ali with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says this project started in September 2008 and is 45 percent complete. It is having a significant impact on the local economy, by employing 30 Iraqi local workers a day. In addition, materials for the project are purchased from local Basra merchants. USACE is helping to jump start Iraq's economy and building a strong foundation for the country's success, he said.

“Currently, we are installing the presidential seating area, public seating area and a meeting hall,” Ali noted. “When we're done, it will be a signature facility Basra families can take pride in.”



An Iraqi worker welds a new pipe joint at the Qurmat Ali water facility near Basra.

Basra receives boost in clean water

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Basra Province will soon see a dramatic increase in the availability of clean water. The \$9.5 million water project will increase the Qurmat Ali water facility's capacity from 4,000 to 16,000 cubic meters per hour.

Mahmood Lafta, Basra water directorate's design team chief, says the facility's production will be sufficient to meet the needs of most neighborhoods throughout Basra Province including: Az Zubair, Khor Az Zubair and Umm Qasr.

He noted that once complete, Qurmat Ali will lessen Basra's dependence on the Sweetwater Canal pump station which is located 90 kilometers north of the city. Taking its water from the Shatt al Arab River, the water facility is located just nine kilometers north of Basra.

"Qurmat Ali will work as an alternative so if the Sweetwater Canal pump station is closed for maintenance or other reasons, the newly-expanded facility will be more than capable of providing fresh water to the people of Basra," Engineer Lafta pointed out.

Apart from the renovation work, the project includes a new chlorine building and chlorination system, a 3,000-cubic-meter ground storage tank, a new steel intake structure, as well as two new 400-cubic-meter-per-hour water treatment units. The Iraqi crew is currently installing



The new steel intake structure is nearing completion at the Qurmat Ali water facility located 9 kilometers north of Basra.

a new switch gear room, two five-megavolt amp transformers, and four new one-megavolt back-up generators.

"We are very satisfied with the construction quality and our engineers are getting more experience by working side-by-side with the contractor's staff which will ensure a successful transition once the project is finished," Engineer Lafta said.

"This is an important improvement for Basra's 2.5 million residents who will now have two independent sources of water for their household needs," Engineer

Lafta concluded.

Providing contract over-watch for this project, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division is helping to jump start Iraq's economy and to build a strong foundation for the country's success by hiring locals to perform the work and purchasing materials for the project within the country. Since the project began in January 2008, about 70 local Iraqis were employed on the construction crew and the materials were purchased from businesses in the area.

School upgrade equals jobs, better learning environment

BY NORRIS JONES
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

An Iraqi crew is renovating a high school in southern Iraq, repairing the leaky roof, replacing hazardous electrical wiring and fixing the non-functioning toilets.

The project at Al Nadwah School in Al Dhyabat Village in the northern Thi Qar Province translates into jobs for the local community with about 40 residents on the construction crew, building materials purchased from area businesses, and the school itself employing 19 teachers.

“These improvements are enhancing the learning environment here,” said construction representative Toni Graves with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “My job is to check on the progress and quality of the work. It’s inspiring to see the appreciative smiles from the students.”

The Iraqi laborers are rehabilitating the floors, ceilings, doors, windows, staircases, interior and exterior walls. New electrical panels, wiring, florescent light fixtures, ceiling fans, power outlets, and switches are being installed. The \$152,000 project is expected to be complete next month.

More than 240 students attend classes at the 15-room facility which was originally constructed nearly 30 years ago.

Headmaster Mohammed says this is the first major renovation his school has had, and the community is very appreciative. “It’s looking great,” he said. “The Iraqi workers - many of whom live here - know how much their efforts mean to area families. Everyone is pleased.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Gulf Region Division has overseen the renovation or new construction of nearly 1,100 schools, and another 38 are still in construction.



These students in Thi Qar Province reap the benefits of the ongoing renovations at their high school.



before



ترميم المدارس

يوفر مزيدا من فرص العمل وبيئة تعليمية أفضل

بقلم نورس جونز
قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج

تواصل مجموعة من العمال العراقيين اعمالها بترميم مدرسة اعدادية في جنوب العراق، حيث يقومون باصلاح السقف الذي ينضح ماء والمرافق الصحية ويبدلون أسلاك الكهرباء الخطرة في مشروع تبلغ تكلفته ١٥٢ ألف دولار.

وعاد مشروع تطوير وترميم مدرسة الندوة في قرية الذبابات في شمالي محافظة ذي قار بالنفع على سكان المنطقة، حيث اوجد فرص عمل لنحو ٤٠ عامل بناء من سكانها، وهم يبنون بالمواد التي تم شراؤها من محلات تجارية في المنطقة، وسيعمل في المدرسة نفسها ١٩ مدرسا عند انجاز المشروع في كانون الأول الجاري.

ويقول ممثل اعمال البناء توني كريفر الذي يعمل لدى فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي ان "اعمال تحسين المدرسة هذه تطور بيئة التعليم هنا" و اضاف "يدور عملي حول اختبار مدى التقدم الذي تم احرازه ونوعية العمل، رؤية ابتسامات الاستحسان على وجوه التلاميذ يعطينا الالهام".

ويقوم العمال العراقيون بترميم الأرضية والسقف والأبواب والشبابيك وسياج السلالم والجدران من الداخل والخارج، فيما يجري تثبيت لوحات كهربائية رئيسة وأسلاك وقواعد المصابيح ومرامح السقف ومآخذ الكهرباء ومفاتيحها.

ويتسع ١٥ صفا دراسيا في المدرسة التي بنيت قبل ٣٠ عاما الى اكثر من ٢٤٠ تلميذا. ويقول مسؤول في المدرسة ان الاصلاحات الاولى الرئيسة قوبلت باستحسان عميق، و اضاف انها "تبدو عظيمة ... فالعمال العراقيون والذين يعيشون هنا يعلمون ماذا تعني هذه الجهود للعائلات التي تعيش في المنطقة، الجميع مسرور".

وأشرفت فرقة منطقة الخليج التابعة لفيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي على اعمال ترميم وبناء جديدة لنحو ١١٠٠ مدرسة، في حين تتواصل الأعمال في ٣٨ مدرسة اخرى.



تلاميذ في صفهم الدراسي يقفون ثمار أعمال الترميم الجارية في مدرستهم بمحافظة ذي قار.



after



The new incinerator at Amarah's landfill should be fully operational in December.

Amarah residents look forward to 'a breath of fresh air' as new incinerator nears completion

BY NORRIS JONES
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Maysan Province will soon be handling its trash in a much more environmentally-friendly manner. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division is installing a modern waste incinerator, which is expected to be fully operational next month. It has the capacity to handle as much as 70 percent of the garbage being hauled to the landfill daily.

“Currently the landfill workers are

openly burning the trash, often blanketing the area in a dense, black, unhealthy smoke,” said Iraqi Engineer Ali Abdul, who is overseeing the work.

The incinerator will be able to handle more than 400 pounds of solid waste or 50 liters of liquid waste per hour, he said, explaining that this is the best way of disposing of Amarah's industrial waste, as well as the bio-medical waste from the

hospitals. “City officials are anxious to see the incinerator up and running. It means families in the area will have much cleaner air to breath. Residents are very happy this project is nearly complete so the bad odors from the landfill will no longer be a problem,” continued Abdul, a lifelong Maysan Province resident.

The nearly \$775,000 project includes a new all-weather asphalt access road, administration office building, a diesel generator, and a 2,000 liter diesel fuel storage facility. It's also providing jobs for the local community, with 20 Iraqis on the construction crew.

“Our community is seeing other signs of progress here,” Abdul explained. The road between Amarah and Maymona is being expanded to a four-lane highway. That \$6.2 million project is nearly complete. In addition, the new Maysan Surgical Hospital is starting to take shape. The 100-bed facility will include several operating rooms, a delivery room, an emergency room, a pharmacy, and various labs. It will house clinics for pediatrics, internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, dental and nuclear medicine. “It's great to be part of this effort,” he noted.



A new all-weather asphalt road now leads to the landfill.

From the kindness of your hearts

Dear readers:

Your donations often bring smiles to the faces of Iraq's people in need, and reflect your American generosity. Instead of expressing our gratitude with words only, we would like to extend our thanks by publishing these expressive photos.

Three Iraqi children belonging to St. George's Church, the last Anglican church in Iraq, received toys collected by GRD members who attend the Anglican Church located in the Green Zone, Baghdad on December 19.



Kevyn Bazy prepares to deliver the donations for St. George's parish. Although a concentrated effort was made for a pre-Christmas delivery, the congregation of the Anglican Church located in the Green Zone will continue to collect donations for St. George's year round.

An Iraqi girl from St. George's parish plays with a colorful ball.



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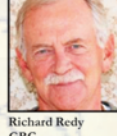
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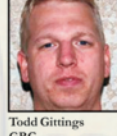
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