

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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Graduates of an adult literacy course listen attentively while local government leaders praise their academic successes during a graduation ceremony at the al-Sharqia Secondary School for Girls in the Karadah district of Baghdad Dec. 4.

100 Iraqi women graduate adult literacy course at al-Sharqia in eastern Baghdad

One hundred women graduated from an adult literacy course at al-Sharqia Secondary School for Girls in the Karadah security district of eastern Baghdad Dec. 4.

The graduates, their family members and other ceremony attendees gathered to celebrate what was the first of potentially many successful adult literacy classes.

“This is the first step of many that the Iraqi government has taken to ensure economic growth in the Karadah district,” said Capt. Sean O’Brien, a program coordinator with 5th Battalion 25th Field Artillery, 4th

Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

“The next step is to employ them.”

Many of the graduates are widows, explained Hadeel Adel, a representative of an Iraqi non-government organization and advocate for women’s rights.

She said the literacy course graduates will be able to use their new skills to study for a civil service examination to seek government employment.

“This is a monumental day for

these women. You can see the future of Iraq in their faces,” said Adel.

“These women will get jobs and relieve the stress on the local economy by providing for their families,” she continued. Adel expressed hopes for a continued partnership between the United States and Iraq.

She also wishes that women’s rights in Iraq will someday mirror the same rights women have in America.

Their graduation marked a successful day for these literate women of Baghdad, and now they possess the power to learn through reading.

South Koreans bid farewell to Arbil after four years service

South Korea's Zaytun Division, which has been operating in Arbil since 2004, bid farewell to its Iraqi and Coalition counterparts during a ceremony Dec. 1.

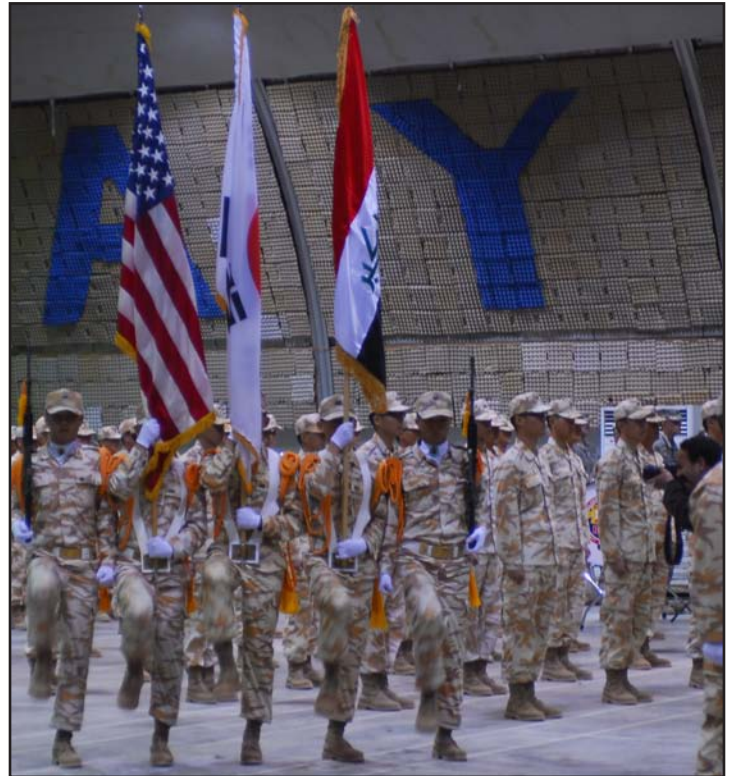
The division has been a presence in the northern region of Iraq for the last four years, focusing efforts on rebuilding the area and creating a better quality of life for the Kurdish-controlled region.

"The Zaytun Division, since its arrival in 2004, has set the standard for reconstruction efforts in Iraq and it serves as the example of what is achievable in the rest of the country," said Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general, Multi-National Corps – Iraq.

The extensive list of Zaytun's achievements include providing medical care for more than 89,000 Iraqis, including 25 children who were brought to South Korea for specialty surgeries, conducting 445 literacy classes graduating 6,245 students and donating 15,000 medical items to clinics in Arbil.

"Through our contributions, we have strived to become members of the local community and true friends," said Maj. Gen. Park Sun-Woo, commanding general, Zaytun Division.

Park said that although Korean forces are leaving the area, they continue to wish for peace and prosperity in



South Korean forces celebrated their achievements during an end of mission ceremony in Arbil Dec. 1. For the past four years, Zaytun Division has been instrumental in improving the quality of life for the residents of Arbil.

Iraq.

"We leave with great assurance of a bright future in Arbil and Iraq," Kim said.

Sons of Iraq transition to training and apprenticeship for road repair services

As Iraq transitions its Sons of Iraq into a Civil Service Corps, its citizens were training and learning to perform road repair services in Balad Nov. 15.

"The Salah ad-Din CSC road crew is a training program that was started to train and transition SoI members into the work force," said Capt. Sonny Avichal, commander, Bravo Company Commander, 561st Engineer Company.

The three-phase program begins with road sanitation, crater repair and equipment apprenticeship.

The first phase, clears the roads of debris and trash – a task that can be performed by a day laborer.

The second phase ushers in the teaching phase with crater repair.

The final phase, equipment apprenticeship, trains the workers on concrete mixers and compacters for larger holes and constructing forms for pouring slabs.

The salary for each employee is about \$300 a month

for workers, foreman and managers. Each crew consists of twelve workers and one foreman.

"This is just the beginning; we have a very bright future," said Mohammed, the site manager.

"Some of the employees have a background in construction and others must be taught everything. The proper mixing of concrete, backfilling with a suitable sub-base, and marking to CSC standard is all supervised by the site manager."

"These workers will eventually work for the city or a private contractor with the experience and training they have received. This training will provide these workers the necessary skills for a steady, long-term job," said 2nd Lt. Jose Villafana, platoon leader, 3rd platoon, 5th Engineer Battalion.

This program intends to provide Salah ad-Din with an economic stimulus by employing 325 military-aged male residents.

CMOs staffs assist Iraqi government with essential needs, systems

Civil military operations is a fairly new staff section in many Coalition force units, charged with conducting projects to support essential needs: water, electricity, sewage and trash services and other services.

The CMO shop is further adjusting to the changing dynamics of operations during the transition from U.S. forces to Iraqi control.

"In Diwaniyah, I have been working with the Provincial Reconstruction Team to help the Iraqis develop systems that will enable their government to take control of their essential needs," said 1st Lt. Keith Phelan.

The PRT is comprised of civilians from various specialties. State Department personnel and experts in infrastructure development, government, politics and law, all volun-



Children take a break from learning while at their temporary classroom in the Qadisiyah province.

teered to deploy to Iraq and provide their knowledge to the Government of Iraq.

The 2-8th CMO section integrated with the several brigade assets, including the PRT and civil affairs teams, in order to better grasp the level of infrastructure of the Qadisiyah province, said Phelan.

The civil affairs team is comprised of four to six Soldiers who special-

ize in assessing services and projects to benefit the local population.

The cooperative efforts developed by the CMO shop enabled them to extend their reach and begin conducting assessments of projects.

The projects have been focused primarily on building the infrastructure and increasing the education opportunities of the local population, Phelan added.



A new water treatment unit will be used to provide clean drinking water to the people in the Qadisiyah province.



A Coalition Soldier stands amidst the foundation for one of the new schools to be built in the Qadisiyah province.



Solar lights provide visibility in Sadr City. The lights were emplaced by local Iraqi contractors and Task Force Gold personnel.

Task Force Gold renovates Sadr City

Solar lights now illuminate the streets of Sadr City. The lights were erected through the hard work and efforts of Coalition Engineer Soldiers, Task Force Gold, and local Iraqi contractors during the summer.

The steady progression of Operational Environment Gold projects began with rubbish cleanup and debris removal, which was followed by medical and humanitarian aid.

Dr. Abdul Samad Rahman Sultan, the Government of Iraq Minister of Displacement and Migration, is in charge of the reconstruction of Sadr City, Baghdad's most densely populated district along with Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, 926th Engineer Brigade commander.

Task Force Gold has also renovated the al-Mithaq pool.

Major Iraqi-led project begins with Army Canal refurbishment

Canal to provide fresh drinking water and irrigation to the people of northeastern Baghdad

As Iraqi flags waved in the air, Iraqi civilian and military dignitaries broke ground on the Army Canal Rehabilitation Project in Baghdad's Sadr City district Dec. 1.

This ceremonial groundbreaking marked the beginning of a commitment by the Government of Iraq to spend \$50 million during the next three years in reconstruction efforts along the al-Kanat Road and surrounding areas, with construction

slated to begin Dec. 17.

The Army Canal, which runs a total of 25 kilometers spanning from Adhamiyah in northeastern Baghdad to Rustimiyah in southeastern Baghdad, was built in 1959 by Abd al-Kassem Quassim, the former president of Iraq.

The canal was meant to provide fresh drinking water and irrigation to the people of northeastern Baghdad, but after years of damage and sediment buildup the canal has been unable to provide water for the people who rely so heavily upon it.

Now, with this groundbreaking marking the beginning of refurbishment to this vital lifeline, the canal will soon flow again with its much needed water.

"This marks a source of hope for the Iraqi people and an example of what the future holds," said Naem

Abub Misayd Al-Kabi, deputy mayor of Baghdad.

The Army Canal rebuilding is just the first step in an extensive three-year plan to improve Baghdad.

In conjunction with this project, the Sadr al-Kanat pump station will be refurbished, several parks and recreational areas will be built and numerous shops and stores will be created. Trees and plants will be sown along the canal to improve life not only in the area surrounding the canal but throughout Baghdad.

This epic project has the potential to employ more than 50,000 people through its lifespan and push Baghdad to the next step in providing essential services to the people who so vitally need them.

"This project will change the face of Baghdad," said Baghdad Mayor Navet Alessawi.