


COALITION BULLETIN

Romanian Troops Distributing Humanitarian Aids In Iraq






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Editor's Note

By the generous permission of our NATO partners, the *Coalition Bulletin* is pleased to bring you stories covering the activities of the International Security Assistance Force. As ISAF and the Coalition are separate entities, ISAF stories will be denoted by the NATO logo at the top of each page when they appear.

Cover photo: Capt. Dan Crisan, the CIMIC Officer of 151st IN ROU BN, is distributing humanitarian aids during one of the "Blanket Distribution" missions in AOR Ar Rafia.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"...And if I can just say a couple of words on the mood in town; there is a real sense of optimism amongst people in the city, a confidence in the liability of ISF (Iraqi Security Forces) that they've seen demonstrated on the streets of their city over the course of the last month now that the rule of law is imposed."

UK Military Spokesman in Southern Iraq

Editorial

Through the Coalition bulletin we continue to project developmental activities of the coalition nations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Most of the nations allocate sizable funds for reconstruction to improve the quality of an average citizen winning hearts



and minds and driving a wedge between people and the militants. Results are encouraging and have contributed significantly to improve prevailing security situation.

Kinetic means alone can never produce positive results unless it is fully complimented with economic and political measures. These pillars of successful strategy have to function in complete harmony for a lasting peace in the region. Presently, however it seems that the military alone is shouldering the entire burden; leading efforts in all aspects directly or indirectly.

Economic development and improvement in security are complimentary to each other. The desired objective of stability is being achieved through the concept of micro level development by Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). There are, however, few aspects which demand a fresh look in to its practical manifestation to ensure that this excellent concept becomes a success story. First, at times the instable security situation is attributed to PRTs' inability to deliver the desired results causing a break in the complete cycle. In spite of the comparatively poor security situation, relentless development efforts must continue unhindered which will eventually bear fruits. The successful functioning of PRTs in the north and west parts of Afghanistan should be pursued vigorously as well as in the east and south. Secondly, in some cases nations prefer to channel their developmental funds through their respective national PRTs.

A common man shows affiliation to the institution that cares for its economic and security needs. It will be more rewarding if these resources are channeled through the central government, whereas PRTs continue to plan and supervise the developmental work. Routing of funds through the centre is inconsonance with the overall objective of having a powerful central government. Most importantly the PRTs' developmental activities should be spread evenly across the country instead of concentrating on a few areas while neglecting others.

Lastly, micro level development through PRTs must be supplemented with macro projects to sustain national economy in the future as well.

This issue of the bulletin provides a glimpse of development activities and humanitarian assistance being provided by the coalition and how national security forces are becoming self confident to take on more difficult and challenging responsibilities.

Coalition News in Brief

WASHINGTON — Increased security brought about by military success against insurgents in the western portion of Iraq's Anbar province is enabling a drawdown of U.S. forces there as well as enhanced regional reconstruction efforts, a senior Marine commander told Pentagon reporters last week.

BAGHDAD – US Embassy ready to open. The heavily fortified complex, the United States' biggest embassy, will provide working and living quarters for more than 1,000 US diplomats and military personnel, many of whom have been posted on the grounds of a former palace of late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

FREEDOM FACTS – The Iraqi Ministry of Health is being provided \$12 million for health-care training to ensure medical personnel have the knowledge to properly work the new equipment that the U.S. Government has funded. In addition, the MoH also has been provided with \$12 million worth of 50 maintenance vans and medical repair tools for maintenance teams, and a one-year maintenance support contract for the Provincial Health Clinics. This will ensure that Ministry has the tools and expertise needed to keep the hospitals and healthcare centers up-and-running.



WASHINGTON — The White House will nominate Army **Gen. David H. Petraeus**, currently commander of Multinational Force Iraq, to be the next U.S. Central Command commander, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates announced April 23

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates speaks to the Press Corps at the Pentagon. Highlights include the nomination of Gen. David Petraeus as the next commander of U.S. Central Command.



Army Medics Give Troops In Basra “The Best Care They Can”



Story and photos
Courtesy of UK MoD

The support offered by UK Medical Group inside and outside Basra’s Contingency Operating Base (COB) allows for the worst-case scenario, so no matter how bad things get, life-saving procedures can be started as quickly as possible. Report by Karen Thomas.



Major Timothy Stansfield, left, and Lt Col Graham Rushforth, RAMC, at work in the operating theatre.

In southern Iraq, specially adapted Bulldog vehicles, the latest battlefield injury treatments and a state-of-the-art hospital with hi-tech diagnostic equipment are all at the disposal of wounded troops.

Emergency first aid - First step to recovery

Combat medical technicians Privates “Shaggy” Ronson and Dexter Brown, Royal Army Medical Corps, travel outside the Contingency Operating Base in the back of a Bulldog vehicle modified as an ambulance in direct support of soldiers on operations. They are ready to take medical charge of an emergency, deal with the injury, stabilise the casualty and get them back to the hospital and into the hands of the specialists. They put their own lives at risk to save those of the troops.

Private “Shaggy” Ronson, RAMC, said:

“I was out with 5 Rifles at the Shatt Al-Arab Hotel on TELIC 8, which was my first tour. I was attached to the infantry so I got a lot of experience as an infanteer as well as medically. There were so many casualties and LCpl Dennis Brady, RAMC, was killed.

“I also treated Cpl Mark Sutcliffe, 2 R Anglian [who lost his leg in an RPG attack], so it was good to see him having gone through rehabilitation and now doing things.”

Private Dexter Brown, RAMC, said:

“It’s my first tour. It’s enlightening and I was shaking at first to see someone hurt. At the time I got on with the job but afterwards it dawns on you that people die out here.

“It becomes real to you. It does build your confidence but you do learn every time you are called out. For example, I have been called to a road traffic accident and seen something new – but we have the training to deal with it.”

From ER to OR

Whisked from the back of the Bulldog – or ambulance if the casualty is on the COB – the patient is calmly but rapidly passed into the emergency room of the hospital. The priority is keeping the casualty stable as their wounds and injuries are assessed and the best course of treatment is decided.

A top-notch team of experienced trauma surgeons are on hand for serious and penetrating wounds. Medics in the intensive therapy unit (ITU) watch over the acutely ill and injured to see them out of danger and set them firmly on the road to recovery.

The hospital is also equipped with a CT scanner, a 24-hour service that sends images via satellite phone to a

diagnostic centre for a rapid assessment of the extent and nature of the injury.

Corporal Christina Hall, Queen Alexandra’s Royal Army Nursing Corp (QARANC), ITU nurse, said:

“This is my second tour but it’s much the same as TELIC 5 when I was at Shaibah Logistic Base. It can be quite demanding with the patients in a bad way, which is why we do specialist training – we’re ready for anything. I enjoy being here with a lot of people and looking after the patients but I hope I won’t be dealing with too many.”

The consultant-led teams have brought advanced and focused treatment very close to the point at which the soldier gets wounded or hurt. Major Tess Grieves, QARANC and Officer Commanding of the hospital, described her team, led by 1 Close Support Medical Regiment, as a “robust, joined-up organisation”:

“It’s great to know you’ve got fantastic staff working for you,” she said. “And it’s also a morale boost for the guys out on the ground to know we are looking after their comrades and giving them the best care that we can.”



Coalition Launches Capacity-Building Operation South Of Baghdad



Story by Sgt. Michael Connors
MND-C PAO

CAMP VICTORY — Multi-National Division – Center kicked off the main phase of its first major operation devoted primarily to capacity building – expanding governance,

Forces-led operations, but also the establishment of a Joint Security Station at Yusifiyah, the development of Iraqi-run radio stations, the injection of funding by the Government of Iraq to refurbish two major water treatment plants and the infusion of funds and expertise into the poultry and



Pfc. Kristen George, from Needles, Calif., tactical assault command, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), provides security for key leaders visiting Yusifiyah April 10. capacity building. The main phase of the operation kicked off April 15.

economics and infrastructure – April 15 in communities south of Baghdad in the Baghdad Province.

Operation Marne Piledriver is taking place in the area of operations of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). While the focus of the operation is on capacity building, Iraqi Security Forces will simultaneously target remaining insurgent pockets with the help of Coalition forces.

Patrol Base Yates, which will house Iraqi and Coalition forces, is currently under construction as a base of operations to bring the fight to the insurgent holdouts. It is named in honor of Cpl. Nyle Yates III, who died in combat in Bayji, Iraq, in 2006 while serving in Company B, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

“Marne Piledriver will not only display Iraqi Security

agricultural industries,” said Col. Dominic J. Caraccilo, commander of 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

Providing training to Government of Iraq officials in the area is another key component of the operation. They will learn how to navigate a democratic, free-market economy after decades of a state-run system under Saddam Hussein. The U.S. Agency for International Development is providing the training.

Maj. T.J. Johnson, one of the main MND-C planners of Marne Piledriver, emphasized the synergy created from the U.S. military and USAID working together.

“It’s a great way of illustrating how our government and our military have to work hand in hand,” he said. “We have to identify what’s important together so that we can go ahead and find a way forward.”



Reconstruction And Development Continue Apace In Musa Qaleh



*Story and photos
Courtesy of UK MoD*



Builders from Musa Qaleh busy rebuilding the Main road in the district centre as soldiers conduct a reassurance patrol

Musa Qaleh is gradually beginning to return to some sense of normality, the reconstruction and development works a testament to the comprehensive joint efforts of the local government headed by Governor Mullah Salam and supported by elements of the UK Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and other elements of the British military.

Supporting Governor Salam, and key to the success of the British Comprehensive Approach, is the location of the PRT's Stabilisation Advisor, Richard Jones in the District Centre in Musa Qaleh. This is the first time that a member of the PRT has been deployed permanently to such a forward location. By being located in the town, Richard is able to assist and advise the Governor and his team on development and local governance initiatives:

"The Comprehensive Approach is really all about ensuring that all the elements of government necessary to rebuild and stabilise an area like Musa Qaleh fall into place," he explained. "It is really a reflection of the complexity of conflict nowadays that you have to have the involvement of not just the military but also the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development."

When asked about the achievements made in Musa Qaleh since December, Richard pointed to the opening of the town's school as just one example of a success story:

"The school reopened here in the middle of February and has certainly been one of the most successful stories in terms of reconstruction and development."

In contrast to the Taliban's failed efforts to open madrassas in the town, the school project has received the unreserved support of the population and enjoys an attendance of some 850 children between the ages of six to sixteen learning everything from math to English. Such is the thirst for

knowledge that the children and teachers attend the school against the very real threat of intimidation from Taliban elements in outlying areas. The students follow an Afghan National Curriculum supported by the Department of Education in Lashkar Gah who have led the drive to refurbish the school from its shambolic state as living quarters for the Taliban until December last year.

The teachers, some of whom have taught at the school for over 40 years through Afghanistan's turbulent times, welcome the security and stability that Afghan National Security Forces supported by ISAF have brought to the area. One of the school's English teachers, Mahmood Salid said:

"We need the current security conditions to continue to allow us to educate the next generation in Musa Qaleh so that we do not see a return to the levels of illiteracy seen under the Taliban."

Relaxing in the school's staff room, the Deputy Head Teacher, Mohammed Nasah, talks of his delight as new classroom furniture and books arrive. To ensure that there is a degree of play time as well as hard work, a British Army team have installed a park at the school with swings and see saws - a common sight for every British child but certainly something that the children of Musa Qaleh are unlikely to have seen.



Children of Musa Qaleh finish school for the day. Approximately 800 pupils now attend since Taliban insurgents were pushed out by ANA and British forces in December 2007

Also deployed to Musa Qaleh to aid the local population is the Task Force Helmand Civil and Military Cooperation (CIMIC) team. This multinational military organisation aims to assist both civilian and military units to achieve their goals and in Musa Qaleh they are at the heart of the reconstruction and development efforts.



the town's traders previously thereby improving road safety for pedestrians and traffic alike. The promises of reconstruction have been further met by the recent installation of a generator to provide a reliable power supply to the District Centre, school and commercial hub of the town. Members of 23 Regiment 1 CS Company Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers constructed a 'Hesco Bastion' protective wall for the generator overseen by engineers from USAID prior to its installation and hook-up to the town's power grid.

Locals watch as soldiers of 5 SCOTS and the Household Cavalry Regiment conduct reassurance patrols in Musa Qaleh

Captain Phillip Adams - on attachment from the Royal Yeomanry to the Household Cavalry Regiment, Blues and Royals - has spent the past six months working on CIMIC projects throughout Helmand province. A partner in a London law firm, Capt Adams is the link between the military and civilian agencies in Musa Qaleh:

"Since December there has been an extraordinary amount achieved, not only militarily, but also the establishment of governance within Musa Qaleh," said Capt Adams. "We now have a functioning government which is interacting with the people, dealing with the people issues and problems which any community faces on a day to day basis."



A local man works on the new main road in Musa Qaleh

Key to the economic regeneration of the commercial centre of Musa Qaleh is the town's road building programme. Coordinated by the Governor's Civilian Secretariat staff, the programme has already seen large sections of the town's roads resurfaced from the pot-holed dust bowls that plagued

So while Musa Qaleh may have come a long way in a short time, with the quality of life for ordinary Afghans already having improved from life under the Taliban, the real challenge for those deployed on Task Force Helmand will be to continue with the progress.



Iraqi Army Takes Lead In Operation



Story by Sgt. Steve Reeves
CENTCOM Public Affairs



operation will continue efforts to root out insurgency and stimulate economic growth and development throughout the Mahmudiyah Qada.

”Our role was to support the Iraqi Army,” said Capt. Ryan Mayfield, from Culver, Ind., commander of Battery A. “Because of what has been going on in the whole country, specifically Mahmudiyah, we are continuing to maintain momentum and ... provide the basic needs, as well as freedom of movement to the people so that the government and tribes can continue to help build the area.”

The Soldiers from 2/25/6 IA Div. teamed with 3rd Platoon, Btry. A, 3-320th FA on dismount patrols, while 1/25/6 IA Div. partnered with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3-320th FA.

“Now that we feel the AQI (al-Qaeda in Iraq) presence is at a minimum, we are about to start establishing Sons of Iraq checkpoints through the area, which adds to the freedom of movement,” Mayfield said. “The main effort of our portion of Piledriver is to develop multiple projects as well as solid governance in the area. We are

An Iraqi Army Soldier leads Coalition and other IA Soldiers during a clearance mission in the Mahmudiyah area that started Operation Marne Piledriver April 15.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAHMUDIYAH — Operation Marne Piledriver launched in the Mahmudiyah area April 15 as Iraqi Army and Coalition forces conducted joint clearance missions.

Soldiers with 1st and 2nd Battalions, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division and 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) combined to conduct dismounted patrols and an air assault.

“The Iraqi Soldiers took initiative from the start,” said Pfc. Nathan Krueger, from St. Clair, Mich., Battery A, 3-320th FA. “Every time I went into a building, there would already be an IA Soldier clearing or searching the area. Once we got on-site, they took the lead.”

Marne Piledriver is the first Task Force Marne major operation focused on capacity-building projects throughout the Rakkasans’ area of operation. This Iraqi Army-led



providing support to the Iraqi Army wherever they deem it’s needed.”



Iraqi Army Discovers Weapon Cache In A Vehicle



Story by MND Southeast
Public Affairs Officer

Soldiers from the 1st Iraqi Army discovered the cache during the search phase of Operation Charge of the Knights.

Operation Charge of the Knights is ongoing with the Iraqi Army working in conjunction with the Iraqi Police to maintain pressure on Special Groups and criminal elements by denying them sanctuaries and safe havens through Basra and Iraq.



An Iraqi soldier with the 1st Iraqi Army examines one of more than 160 mortars found during Operation Charge of the Knights in Basra April 19. Some of the markings on the weapons indicate a manufacturing date in 2007.

The cache consisted of a large number of weaponry with Iranian markings.

The cache included a 240 mm high-explosive war-head and approximately 160 mortars. Some of which were less than 12 months old.

The cache also contained approximately 25 artillery shells, more than 20 complete improvised explosive devices, large quantities of IED components, several explosively formed projectiles and dozens of grenades and fuses. Also included was more than 20 blocks of plastic explosives, homemade anti-personnel mines packed with ball bearings, hundreds of meters of detonation cord, improvised rocket launching rails, and thousands of rounds of small-arms ammunition.

“Operation Charge of the Knights has been an Iraqi planned and executed operation from the very start,” said Lt. Col. Neil Harper, deputy public affairs officer for Multi-National Corps - Iraq. “The Iraqi Army demonstrated their capability to protect the people of Basra against Special Groups and criminal elements that are ignoring the rule of law.

“The success in finding these large caches was also due in part by numerous tips from concerned local Iraqis. This is another great example of Iraqis dealing with their own issues, and they should be admired for their bravery,” Harper said.



“Esun Sud” Soldiers, Protecting Camp Echo



Story and photos courtesy of Mongolian Infantry Company “Esun Suld”, Iraq



Mongolian Contingent’s Operations Officer Maj. D. Ariunbold, briefs soldiers.

The 9th rotation of Mongolian Contingent assumed command of base security at Camp Echo in central southern Iraq about two months ago. The Contingent named “Esun Suld” performs internal patrols in the base perimeter and maintaining security at the forward operating base, which houses coalition members and civilian contractors.

LTC Radnaabazar Erdenebileg, commander of 9th rotation, said his contingent arrived with a well-trained group of Soldiers to conduct their sensitive mission. The 100 infantrymen trained with experienced trainers of Peacekeeping Battalion 150, at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia, during harsh winter 2007.

“TOC TOC this is OP 1 reporting, suspicious personnel movement observed in 100 meters, 252

degrees, guard continues to observe its area. Over”
“TOC TOC this is OP 3 reporting, heard an explosion in approx 900 meters, 25 degrees, no further information, Over”.

“TOC TOC this is OP 7 reporting, incoming in approx 1100 meters, 85 degrees, 2 rounds fired. First exploded out of the base perimeter, 150 meters, 53 degrees, second landed and exploded near gravel yard, 55 meters from OP, on base. Over”.

All these pieces of information transmitted to Contingent’s Ops room and Division TOC is given by the Mongolian Contingent’s members who man the Observation Tower. Under Mongolian soldiers’ watchful eyes all those residing on base have no worry of enemy course of action against base.

Keeping eyes on all activities out of base perimeter as far as 500 meters, depends on terrain, reports to the Ops room, and respond against any terror action in accordance with ROE if necessary, remain and preserve control out of Echo base is duty of Mongolian Contingent’s soldiers.

Two soldiers manning one of 9 guard towers have full responsible for the security of their area of control 24 hours while their platoon’s shift is on. As on-duty soldiers report to contingent’s Ops room, which is also manned 24 hours a day by duty officer and communication team, every 10 minutes, guardman and communication team work in



Sgt. O. Oyunbat and B. Battur are on duty at the entrance control point, Camp Echo.



“Esun Sud” Soldiers, Protecting Camp Echo



SSgt. B. Bayarsaikhan checks a coalition convoy which is entering to Camp Echo.

close cooperation with each other in order to provide an essential information to its chain of command.

Camp Echo is a high value target for the insurgents. Mongolian contingent’s members are well aware of how essential their duty is to protect and save the lives of fellow coalition members, contracted civilians and local Iraqi employees. When indirect fire occurs against Camp Echo struck by anti coalition militias, the ones who alert the base first by reporting to Ops room on the launched attack and impact of fired mortar or rockets on site, are also the Mongolian soldiers.



Mongolian Contingent Commander, Lt. R. Erdenebileg, along with Major General A. Malinovski, Commanding General of MND-CS and Col. David E. Leckrone, USA SNR at Camp Echo.



Norwegian Helicopters Ready For Afghan Mission



Story and photos courtesy of
Cpt Rune Thomas Ege, Norway PIO Afghanistan



“The Norwegian detachment will have an immediate and positive effect on ISAF’s operations in Northern Afghanistan, operations meant to help the Afghan people to restore their country back to a state of peace,” says Dammjacob.

The helicopter mission is split in half between 137. Air Wing at Rygge Air Station and 139. Air Wing at Bardufoss Air Station.

The commander of the detachment, Lieutenant Colonel Tom Snedal, highlights the differences between flying in Norway and in Afghanistan.

“The greatest challenge is the heat and the sand. The conditions here are very different from what we are used to,” says Snedal.

After two weeks of training and testing, the three Norwegian Bell 412 helicopters landed in the Norwegian Camp Meymaneh at the beginning of April. This will be their base for the next 18 months, providing the coalition forces with a much anticipated medevac capacity.

“Up until now, we have relied on German helicopters stationed one and a half hours away for medical evacuation. Now that we have our own helicopters here in Meymaneh, we will be able to operate more safely than before, says Lieutenant Colonel Espen Arntzen, commander of the Norwegian Provincial Reconstruction Team in Meymaneh.

The helicopter detachment has been named Norwegian Aeromedical Detachment (NAD), and will be a part of PRT Meymaneh. Arntzen underlines the need for such a contribution to the PRT.



“The helicopters will also support our allies if necessary, both ISAF forces and Afghan security forces. We often operate with smaller independent groups far away from the camp. If something was to happen, the helicopters will greatly aid quick transportation of injured soldiers back to treatment,” Arntzen explains.

ISAF’s commander for Northern Afghanistan, the German Brigadier Dieter Dammjacob, was present as the Norwegian helicopters were welcomed.

“We have well motivated and trained people with us with drive and good initiative. Our focus is on doing everything we can to support the Norwegian forces and our allies in Afghanistan,” Snedal says.



A New School In Cuneo Initiated By An Italian Alpine Regiment



Story and photos courtesy of Italian Ministry of Defense



Inauguration of work beginning on building a new school.

Today, close to Khenankel town in Mushai valley, 24 miles south of Kabul, a cornerstone ceremony was held in building a new school edifice which will provide a better class environment for the village students who are currently attending their lessons in an open field tent.

Beside the construction of a new building, the Alpines of the 2nd Regiment which currently consists the Italian contingent in Kabul (Italfor) under the command of Colonel Michele Risi, will provide reconstruction also to the old existing school building, so it can hospitalize in all 800 students (divided in three daily turns).

The ceremony, beside the Italfor Commander, was attended also from representatives of Afghan Ministry of Education and high local representatives as well.

The work was financed by the funds of Granda-Kabul project, a launched initiative from the 2nd Alpine Regiment, in which adhered major enterprises and institutions of Cuneo province and where were collected around \$200.000

Beside the currency contribution, generosity of Cuneo habitants, it has been also possible to collect humanitarian aids from Italy which were assembled in containers and are now on their way to be distributed to the poor people living

in the province.



Students sitting in a class of the old school.

ANZAC Celebration



Mongolian Country Presentation



Award Ceremenoy for Golf Tournament Winner



Coalition's Soccer (Football) Match



Jordanian Country Presentation



Norwegian Country Presentation





Iraqi policeman detain an Iraqi Army instructor, who is simulating being a criminal, during entry control point operations training at the Tarmiyah police station.