



The Advisor

Iraqi army opens \$165 million base at An Numaniyah

*By U.S. Army
Sgt. Jared Zabaldo,
MNSTC-I Public Affairs Office*

AN NUMANIYAH, Iraq – The Iraqi flag was raised over the newly refurbished and rebuilt forward training base Sept. 1 in a base opening ceremony on the station's parade grounds signaling an end to the roughly \$165 million Coalition project.

The opening coincides with the arrival of the Iraqi Intervention Force's 3rd Battalion recruits who join two other battalions currently training at the base. An Numaniyah will serve as the Iraqi army's 2nd Brigade headquarters.

"The flag is the motto of our country," 5th Division Commander, Brig. Ahmed, said addressing the assembled soldiers and dignitaries. "It is a symbol of our country," he said.

"Our country suffers from maladies, stagnation, and many problems," Ahmed said. "But this base is a step toward rebuilding our nation," he said.

Since renovation began



Coalition and Iraqi army leaders and local sheiks look on as the Iraqi army raises the Iraqi flag over the army base at An Numaniyah, Iraq, Sept. 1. The ceremony over the newly refurbished and re-built forward training base signals an end to the roughly \$165 million Coalition project. Photo by U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Joe Kane.

early this year Coalition efforts have included work on existing buildings – mostly shells without windows, electricity, and septic systems – and also the addition of new structures, sewers, electricity, air conditioning, security, and various other projects on the base.

Located roughly 90 miles southeast of Baghdad in the Wasit Province, the base

was formerly a project under construction by Yugoslavian contractors for the former regime. It will now operate as a training base for new recruits and serve as the home station for three battalions of the Iraqi Intervention Force – the Iraqi army's counterinsurgency wing.

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**U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus
Commander, Multinational Security Transition
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From the Commander. MNSTC-I

Today marks the third anniversary of the tragedy of September 11th. The images of that day remain indelibly etched into our memories and, despite the passage of time, we will never forget the loss of nearly 3,000 men, women, and children on that fateful day. It is fitting that we pause today to remember the victims and the loved ones left behind.

For members of our military family, the last three years have been a time of tremendous sacrifice and service. Coalition forces have been called up, mobilized, and deployed to confront the enemies of freedom, liberate oppressed peoples, and help to

foster freedom and democracy.

I express my gratitude to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civilians from all our Coalition nations -- as well as the many brave Iraqis with whom we work -- for your sacrifices here in Iraq and for your contributions to the Global War on Terrorism. Despite the daily challenges and daunting tasks that confront us in this very difficult environment, we are making great strides. Equipment is flowing, infrastructure is being completed, units are being trained and mentored, and brave Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other Iraqi security

personnel we have helped are fighting to secure a unified, stable, democratic, and free Iraq.

Today as we pause to reflect on the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001, let us also pause to rededicate ourselves to the job that still lies ahead of us. We must continue to exercise initiative, display determination, exhibit innovativeness, and demonstrate personal courage in all our tasks. As we do, we will succeed.

Thank you again for your tremendous service. It is an honor and privilege to serve with you.

Phoenix 6

Coalition facilitates emergency Iraqi police training academy

**By U.S. Army
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MNSTC-I Public Affairs Office**

BAGHDAD, IRAQ – The first phase of construction at the Sulaymaniyah Iraqi Police Regional Academy broke ground Sept. 2, in response to an immediate need for additional basic training space for the country's police forces.

In what amounted to just a five-day turnaround from original site inspection on Aug. 29, to the bid selections two days later – finally resulting in on-site work commencement six days ago – the \$498,000 project should ultimately last six months. Training operations at the emergency base are slated to begin Sept. 15, with a class of 250 students, according to Coalition officials.

Construction began at ground level with basic tent and trailer facilities and new electrical and sewer systems and will migrate to more permanent facilities as work continues.

The second phase will run another two years and commit an additional \$2 million to the project – part of a larger effort to stand up a basic training school capable of running 1,000 students through the eight-week instruction course. The second phase went out for contract Tuesday and will add the balance capacity of 750 students to the facility, scheduled to kick off operations, October 15.

The emergency effort resulted from current Iraqi Police Service training academies operating at

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Progress continues at Iraqi army training base

**By U.S. Army
Capt. Steve Alvarez,
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KIRKUK, Iraq – A cooperative effort to build a new Iraqi Army training base will help ease a city’s unemployment rate and help keep laborers and construction suppliers within the community area of Kirkuk, Coalition officials reported here recently.

The plan, estimated to cost approximately \$138 million, focuses on employing local labor and procuring the labor materials from the Kirkuk area, as well as involving local stakeholders. The project is scheduled for completion in November.

“We feel that this project is the most significant thing to take place in Kirkuk since its liberation,” Economic Development Team Leader U.S. Army Capt. Troy E. Nehls said. “We rolled out the red carpet because we knew contractors in Kirkuk would benefit,” he said. Nehls is assigned to the 451st Civil Affairs Battalion from Houston, Texas.

The project began in March when the Kirkuk Business Center met with representatives from Environmental Chemical Corporation International (ECCI), the projects prime contractor, to discuss building the training base. Later meetings included coordination between the Coalition and the Kirkuk Contractors Union, provincial leaders, and citizens. Finally in April 2004, there was a ribbon cutting ceremony that kicked off the project.

“We knew a lot of people would be applying for this project,” Nehls said. “In



An Numaniyah Base Advisory Team member, U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard Sayers explains dosage instructions to town leaders in the village of Al Bulha, Iraq. Photos by Sgt. Frederick Thomas

Coalition corpsman saves village from blindness Navy medic Identifies Contagious Eye Disease

**By U.S. Army
Sgt. Jared Zabaldo,
MNSTC-I Public Affairs Office**

AN NUMANIYAH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Just southwest of here lies the poor village of Al Bulha, one of many in this Wasit Province area of Iraq surrounding the base. It recently received a terrible scare, ultimately leaving an entire community in the lurch. The potential harm

was too critical to ignore.

“The worst case scenario for the disease is blindness in one year,” said U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard Sayers, a Fleet Marine Force Corpsman with the Multinational Security Transition Command – Iraq, Health Affairs Section, speaking on the brutal disease

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the first couple of days, more than 500 people applied. Today, over 300 people are working through coordinated efforts with the local employment center.”

By May, more than 100 local companies had participated in a job fair and registered their companies with ECCI. More than 50 companies were Kurdish, 30 Turkoman, 12 Arab and four were Christian. Currently, the project employs more than 1,500 Iraqis with an expected

spike to 2,000.

The project will include space for a three battalion/one brigade base that includes housing, life support, training and management.

The civil venture will include the construction of roads, perimeter fences, storm water systems, sanitary sewer systems, a water supply and distribution system, an electrical distribution system,

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A boy from the village exhibits the telltale bluish margins of Trachoma. Correctible in the “blue haze” stage, the blinding disease attacks the cornea by first surrounding it, then working its way in.

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“Trachoma.”

Trachoma is a communicable disease afflicting a victim’s eyes and is transmitted through eye-to-eye contact, the sharing of contaminated articles such as towels, or by eye seeking flies.

The disease, one of the earliest recorded eye diseases dating back to the 27th Century B.C., is the leading cause of blindness worldwide, and afflicts over 400 million people. Primarily found in underdeveloped countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, the prognosis is excellent if treated early with simple antibiotics. Untreated cases, however, result in corneal scarring and sure blindness.

“It’s correctible in the ‘blue haze’ stage,” Sayers said, “but once it turns to scar tissue, you’re blind,” he added, also relating that the ‘blue haze’ attacks the cornea by surrounding it with the disease before working its way in.

So it was with great fortune that Coalition contractors identified a potential problem sometime in May and turned the issue over to Sayers, the lone medic on the base, who went into action on the unknowing villagers’ behalf.

Sayers, a corpsman formerly involved in many civil action program projects in the area along with the 10 other base advisory team members, here, unsure of the ultimate diagnosis, took digital photos of the villagers’ eyes and forwarded them onto doctors in the United States. The doctors confirmed the early suspicions of the contractors – one whom had formerly been through a class on Trachoma, nearly 40 years ago – and armed with the professional confirmations, Sayers went into action.

“We were able to get a hold of 47,000 antibiotic tablets for the village,” he said. “But the big thing was we had to manage the distribution. Imagine the last time you were given a prescription for only seven to 10 days and actually followed through on the directions. And now we’re looking at 28 days.

“If only one patient does not comply,” Sayers said, “re-infection will occur. So we made up explicit instructions and had them translated into Arabic and gathered the leaders around and said,

‘Look, when the ‘Meds’ get here, I have to have your help. So you’re going to have to listen and take care of this,’” he said.

The instructions included every age, demographic, male, female, old, young, pregnancies, everything, to make it happen. And it did.

Residents, over the age of eight, received two doses of Doxycycline a day for 28 days with the balance of the infected villages of Al Bulha given a similar amount relative to age and condition. And from the outlook some 60-plus days after the first treatment with the drug on June 29, the Trachoma attack has been thwarted. Just one day in the life of a Navy corpsman.

Indeed, though, the medical civil action programs, otherwise known as “MEDCAPS,” in the Wasit Province areas surrounding the new base that will be the home to three Iraqi Intervention Force battalions, an army Brigade

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Sayers checks the eyes of a local girl in the village of Al Bulha near the An Numaniyah Military Training Base. The small village was attacked with Trachoma – a communicable disease that leads to blindness within one year if left untreated.



Iraqi army 2nd Brigade Commander, Brig. Gen. Kadum Khalid Ali interacting with students at the Nasser school opening in An Numaniyah in August. Khalid cut the ribbon at the formal ceremony as part of a larger effort to engage local citizens with their army. Photo provided by Petty Officer 1st Class Richard Sayers.

Coalition team helps Iraqi forces ‘serve the people’

***By U.S. Army
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AN NUMANIYAH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – “We went into Al Hayat where a “mud hut” school had collapsed,” An Numaniyah Coalition Commander, U.S. Army Maj. John Ciccarrelli said, relating a conversation he and his base advisory team had with the local citizens of a village neighboring the base, “[we] asked them what they wanted and they just looked at us with confused looks on their faces like, ‘What do you mean?’

“And we said, ‘Where

do you want your new school?’” he continued. “And they indicated where and we said, ‘Okay,’ and jaws dropped again.”

“Then we asked them, ‘Well what kind of school do you want?’” he said finishing the story, “and they thought for a second and said, ‘Uh...two stories,’ and we said, ‘Okay. Whatever you want.’”

Jaws dropped again and the school was built.

It’s more than a civil action program for the 11-man team from the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) dispatched to build a \$165 million military

base at An Numaniyah, roughly 90 miles southeast of Baghdad. CMATT is tasked with assisting the Iraqi government train, mentor and equip its armed forces. It is, rather, about helping the new Iraqi army bridge the gap between the old army’s self-serving relationship with the citizens of Iraq with its new mission of protecting them.

“It is the duty of the Iraqi army to serve the people,” Iraqi army 2nd Brigade Commander, Brig. Gen. Kadum Khalid said, at

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Iraqi Counterterrorism Force soldiers reviewed by Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, Sept. 9.

Photos by U.S. Army Capt. Steve Alvarez



Iraqi Emergency Response Unit soldiers, Sept. 9. The “ERU” is a SWAT-type quick reaction force used for national level emergencies. Recruits negotiate intense training only after making it through standard police basic training.

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Headquarters, and an Iraqi Police Service Regiment, does not stop there.

They have also included the evacuation of a large group of Iraqi children to America for various illness treatments, local Leishmaniasis cases, chronic eye and sinus problems, stomach problems, intestinal parasites, antifungals, and a host of other maladies. To that end, Sayers estimates he has personally handed out with the local team roughly 13,000 tablets of Motrin and Sudafed, a couple hundred bottles of Afrin, Visine, 10 cases of Mylanta, while administering various shots and 60,000 antibiotic tablets.

“And as many multi-vitamins as we can get our hands on,” Sayers said. “We’ve even spent our own money at the post exchange,” he added before relating a final story of a mammoth effort from family and friends in Birmingham, Ala., who filled 31 boxes with medical supplies from the local St. Vincent’s Hospital where his mother works before convincing United Parcel Service to ship the supplies to Iraq for free. The local manager for the shipping company even kicked in his own funds to get the balance of the shipment, not covered by the company, onto the aircraft and into the country.

“These kinds of efforts mean a lot to the people here,” said Sayid Ali, an influential

leader from the neighboring town of An Numaniyah familiar with the base advisory team’s efforts to reach out to the local citizens, “because it shows that Americans are not here to destroy but to help the Iraqi people.

“Especially here, because we are a peaceful town,” Ali said.

It’s just a few of the many unheralded efforts occurring in Iraq every day.

“Treating kids is where you make your money,” Sayers said. “It’s the key to this thing.

“And I was told a long time ago, if you’re looking for medals or awards, don’t get into this business,” he said. “Because the best thing you can ever have is for a patient to tell you ‘Thank you.’”

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“The new buildings and the work of the Coalition team here is remarkable,” said Kudayir (surnames withheld for security reasons), a local school teacher, here, employed also as a translator at the base. “And the base causes a good purpose here because it provides jobs. It provides something for the population,” he said.

“All this is a miracle really,” Kudayir said referring to the impact the local base has had on the local economy. In addition to serving as a much needed training base for the Iraqi armed forces, the base

employs roughly 2,000 workers from the surrounding areas in the province.

Kudayir also pointed out other positive impacts the base project has had on the community. The Coalition team, assisting the Iraqis to stand up their new base, employed local citizens in many critical community projects including school construction and refurbishments, medical assistance projects, water projects and various other projects.

“The role of the Iraqi army is to protect the country and its people,” Ahmed said.

“Cooperation between the civilians and the army to

do their best is important in order to build their country because the army serves the people.”

Joining bases in Al Kasik, Kirkuk, Taji, and Kurkush, An Numaniyah may also – finances depending – include base housing for soldiers’ families to join personnel serving at the post. Two base dining facilities will be complete in the coming months as well with the capacity to feed roughly 3,000 soldiers each.

“Words cannot express our feelings at seeing the Iraqi flag flying in the wind.”

**Iraqi army 2nd Brigade
Commander, Brig. Gen.
Kadum Khalid**

An Iraqi Police Services regiment is also tentatively slated to commence special military operations in urban terrain training – counter-insurgency instruction – with the arrival of a large officer class sometime toward the end of September. Currently the garrisoned and training force numbers tally some 2,500 soldiers.

“It is an honor to stand before you,” 2nd Brigade Commander, Brig. Gen. Kadum Khalid said, finishing the ceremony. “On behalf of the Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers and the country of Iraq, I assume responsibility for this base.

“It’s another step toward reaffirming our full sovereignty,” Khalid said. “I wish that our flag will stand up high over all of Iraq. Words cannot express our feelings at seeing the Iraqi flag flying in the wind.”

The military side of the project includes clinics, a mosque, dining facilities, barracks, headquarters facilities, lecture halls, a fire station, a jail, maintenance facilities, warehouses, fuel

Iraqi Armed Forces to provide troops with religious Imams

**By U.S. Army
Sgt. Jared Zabaldo
MNSTC-I Public Affairs Office**

BAGHDAD, IRAQ – An ongoing effort to facilitate the Iraqi army’s transformation into a force committed to taking care of its soldiers is manifesting itself in the form of Imams – religious clergy – on site at the Kurkush Military Training Base roughly 70 miles northeast of Baghdad.

The effort to staff the religious leaders is part of the Iraqi government’s ongoing mission to stand up a viable security force in the country.

Currently the effort includes four Imams; two Shia and two Sunni religious leaders. Initial plans include the recruitment of 12 more Imams distributed amongst the recently opened base at An Numaniyah, the Taji Military Training Base and the base at Umm Qasr, as mosques, under construction at each location, come on line.

Previously the now defunct Iraqi Ministry of Religion had vetted the Kurkush Imams. Future recruitment efforts for the civilian religious leaders will run through the Ministry of Cultural Affairs’ Departments of Shia and Sunni.

No dates have been slated for the Imam hiring’s at the bases.

The Shia and Sunni forms of Islam are the dominant religious followings in the country.

The Iraqi government integrates all denominations and ethnic groups into its forces.

stations, motor pools, and various unit buildings.

In addition to providing employment for the region, the project is also offering training to unskilled workers.

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street light and motor pool lighting systems, a parade ground and review stand, and three small arms ranges.



A collapsed single-story “mud-hut” style school in the village of Al Hayat near the An Numaniyah Military Training Base; one of more than 70 schools in the Wasit province being rebuilt or refurbished.

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the base opening Wednesday. “The Iraqi people will run their country now, but much remains to be done to protect them.

“That is the new goal of the army,” Khalid said. “We’re here to serve the people. My country suffers from maladies and stagnation, and we need to build it again.”

It was only a short time ago that the efforts to commence the reconstruction project plan at the Wasit Province base began. Cicaerrelli said that in addition to the construction, the team made it part of their mission to help their counterparts in the Iraqi army truly exist for the people.

“The Iraqi military in the past was seen as repressive, corrupt, brutal and non-representative,” Ciccarrelli wrote in his self-styled “manifesto” outlining the civil engagement plan for the training post.

“The Iraqi Armed Forces needs to reinvent itself,”

continued Ciccarrelli. “One of the best methods to begin this transformation is with local civil action programs,” he concluded.

The manifesto went on to clearly define a two-phase plan to integrate the base and the garrisoned forces into the surrounding communities quickly while also tackling long-range plans for the future. Projects included school

refurbishments and constructions, water projects, medical civil action programs, house and village visits, conferences, and have even included appearances at local funerals as a show of support that has gone a long way toward improving the public perceptions of both the Iraqi Armed Forces and the Coalition personnel assisting them.

“The people here are very happy with this army,” said Saad Ali, a local leader and school teacher in An Numaniyah, who is also the son of Ali Habeeb Alkhateeb – Ali Sistani’s representative in Southern Iraq. Sistani is a religious figure in Najaf.

“General Khalid has promised many things to these people, but before with government officials they were only promises,” Ali said. “Now they see it,” he said.

Ali pointed to the recent opening of the Nasser school in An Numaniyah that transformed the old dilapidated building serving as a kindergarten into a beautiful two-story structure for the

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New brick walls of the Al Hayat village’s rebuilt school house. The new structure in the poor town will be two stories tall.

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children of the poor village. Khalid cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony.

“The reaction was,” Ali said, “that the people said they now trusted him. It had been years ago that they were promised these things by the old officials.”

“And God willing,” said Khalid, “we will continue to do these things. And spend the money on good things.”

To be sure, though, much needs to be done in the area long neglected under the previous regime and the residents are hungry for it. The major problem in the area is the tenuous water supply from the Tigris to the inland communities surrounding the newly opened base to the west of the river.

“In the villages we have no water,” said Jalal Ali, a Sheikh from An Numaniyah.

“Our people suffer from many things and even have no electricity in some villages,” he said. “We need more water and clean water,” he added.

And it is on the way.

In addition to building and refurbishing five schools, conducting a myriad of critical medical projects, upgrading a pump station, as well as hosting several other smaller projects including housing material projects for private residences – all, in sum, totaling more than \$2 million of funded projects for the good of the people – a \$1 million water project is near the final stages of approval.

It will include the widening of canals and the installation of

four new pumping stations capable of pushing 2,904 gallons per second out to four cities and some 22-odd villages in the area. That translates into 250,800,000 gallons a day to a population of approximately 180,000 people in the general area. And, the tidal wave of water will raise canal levels high enough to be fed into some of the long unused water purification facilities near key cities along the routes that previously could not pull water from the low canal levels or dry creek beds. Many “dry” villages and towns had attempted to combat the water problem by sinking wells into the rusty brown colored below-ground reservoir heavily polluted with sulfite and phosphate contaminants.

Quality of life benefits aside, though, one of these actions aimed at finally serving the citizens of Iraq has been the proof that these forces are here to help the people improve their lives.

The base now gets regular visits from local leaders and concerned citizens on a near daily basis providing information on insurgent actions and movements in the area. And in many cases, citizens have even moved to thwart the presence of these problems on their own including a recent incident in An Numaniyah where members of the Mehdi Militia

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maximum capacity as the Iraq government continues its ongoing mission to train its police forces.

The quick turnaround was made possible by the Coalition’s quick reaction funding program, otherwise known as “QRF.” Phase two will pull funds from the Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

Additional regional training facilities for the police forces will be added around the country in the coming months including one in the Anbar province currently capable of training roughly 100 students.

Najaf will likely receive an academy as well using a similar model.

had taken over the police station. Residents banded together and unceremoniously kicked them out of town.

And when three men armed with rocket propelled grenade launchers appeared in Karbala, recently, local leaders sent them packing as well.

“We just needed some time to recognize the truth of this place,” Kudayir said, a teacher at the high school, moonlighting as a translator on the base with 2,000 other Wasit Province residents employed here. Kudayir, says, along with the vast majority of the other local citizens in the area that much yet needs to be done for the quality of life of these people. His final point, though, signals a change in the wind in more ways than one for them.

“This community now,” Kudayir said, “no longer sees this base as a threat.”

**Upcoming
MNSTC-I Coalition Holidays**

	
<u>SEPTEMBER 12</u>	<u>OCTOBER 4</u>
<i>Eid Al Isra'Wal Mi'raj - Jordan</i>	<i>Labour Day - Australia</i>

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