

February 19, 2008

Serving Task Force Marne

Mahmudiyah hosts business expo

STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK 3RD BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

CAMP STRIKER — Iraqi businesses put their capabilities on display at the Al Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad Feb. 15-17 for a three-day exposition.

The first-ever Baghdad Business to Business Expo enabled business owners and managers to show other companies what they have to offer.

"This is the first time in Iraq's history they've actually had to market their wares and get people to look at it," said Maj. Robert Bertrand, civil affairs planner for 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). "Getting out, marketing and

big change for them." Mahmudivah-based companies in particular are now adapting to a free-market

economy.

The Ready Made Clothes Company and the National Metallic and Bicycle Company are privately and state-owned companies that previously only produced goods for the government. With help from the State Department's embedded

Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mahmudivah and the Rakkasan Soldiers, busithe nesses have expanded their lines of products and are trying to increase their cli-

entele. The expo

gave both companies an opportunity to do just that.

"If there's a restaurant and the restaurant needs uniforms, (they) have the Ready Made Clothing factory that operates in Mahmudiyah," Bertrand said. "They now know they can go there and have their shirts made. Or, if they need a table

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Arab Jabour businessman opens restaurant

SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY 2ND BCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB KALSU — Money may not buy happiness, but it is putting a smile on the face of Hussen Jowd. Although Jowd is spending more money than ever, he considers it money well spent as he increases the size of his business.

Things were not always so good for Jowd. Before Coalition Forces moved into the area, the community was plagued with violence. Terrorists roamed the area, making it a safe haven for insurgents and a staging ground to launch attacks into Baghdad.

Despite living in conflict, Jowd held onto his dream of one day expanding his small butcher shop into a larger enterprise.

"I've been very busy," he said, noting that the return to peace has done wonders for his shop. While the main customers are still residents of Arab Jabour, his market size has increased.

In recent weeks, Jowd said he has received orders for his products from Baghdad.

While residents of the rural community typically look for higher-quality goods from Baghdad, the situation is reversed for Jowd.

"I get calls from Baghdad for my meat. They love the quality," he said, noting the farming fields of Arab Jabour where his flocks graze are good for "fattening up" the flock. "In Baghdad, they don't have the fields to raise these animals."

Jowd guarantees his customers that the meat he sells is fresh. Each day he butchers the day's sales, refusing to keep meat any longer than a day, a practice which has left his customers satisfied.

The freshness is also apparent in his new restaurant, a small building located next to the butcher shop.

Within the four brick walls, he prepares his own dishes; the most popular is tikka, a kabob delicacy in Iraq. Covering the meat with a blend of herbs and spices, he cooks it on a grill in front of the customers before placing it in a neat bread roll stuffed with home-grown cucumbers and tomatoes.

"I've been very busy fulfilling all the requests," Jowd said.

Originally, the trade which he learned from his father and dates back deep into his family's history, was only practiced by himself and his son, who he hoped to pass the business on to. Now, with demand so high, Jowd has an additional 10 apprentices.

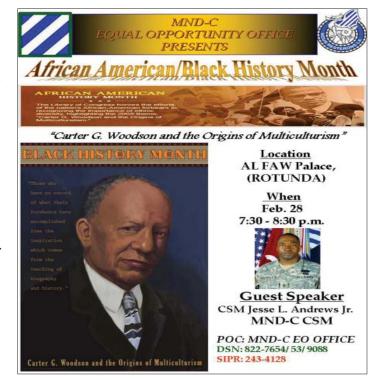
Jowd said he could have never done it without the support of Coalition Forces. Coalition Forces have been jumpstarting local businesses through the use of microgrants which are given to small business owners to encourage economic growth. The grants are designed to increase jobs and potential economic growth in the area, said Capt. Rems Keane, Company B, 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

The creation of jobs is vital, not only to the economic welfare of the community, but also to the safety and stability of the community.

The lack of jobs and income in the area was a tool used by the insurgency to gain recruits.

Jowd's next goal is to save up enough revenue to buy a delivery truck, allowing him to deliver his meats all across the community. Already, he said, several installments are set aside.

For now though, Jowd is focused on the task at hand: butchering sheep and cows, selling the meat to area families and creating his own take-out sandwiches for folks just looking for a goodquality meal.



THE

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Spc. Ben Hutto

The right hand of friendship

Staff Sgt. Sean Kane, 37, from Los Altos, Calif., a section sergeant in 2nd platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, currently attached to 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment hands a small child candy during a patrol in Saharoon, a small village east of Baghdad, Feb. 12.

EXPO: Mahmudiyah businesses display wares at three-day exposition

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made, (they) have the National Metallic Bicycle factory that fabricates metal products."

John Stafford, a business expert with the ePRT in Mahmudiyah, is helping companies learn how to push products and other aspects of a free-market business. By maintaining close contact with the businesses, pushing them to broaden their horizons and working as their marketing officer, Stafford has given the clothing and metal-working companies a real chance for success,

said Louis Lantner, ePRT team leader.

"Most companies (at the expo) and most companies in Iraq don't understand the concept or the need of a marketing officer," Lantner said.

Lantner said marketing is key to the success of even America's best-known brands. Though the brands may already be household names, those companies continue to spend enormous sums on marketing, something Iraqi companies had not yet grasped.

Allowing the companies to market their goods at the expo was a marker of success for the ePRT and Rakkasans who have worked hard to get the companies going. Not only was it proof that lessons of how to operate a company in a free market were working, it was also a triumph to have those businesses producing again and employing locals.

Area businesses' doors had been closed due to a lack of security in the Mahmudiyah qada, but now security has improved. With attacks down significantly, people are returning to work.

As jobs are restored and businesses expand, the hope is for the Iraqis to achieve economic stability in the qada.

Safety Thought of the Day

Insect Repellants

- DEET is the only insect repellant approved by the Army. Do not use picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus based repellants.
- Apply a thin coat of DEET to uncovered skin. One application is good for up to 12 hours.
- Do not apply over cuts, wounds, sunburned or irritated skin, or around the eyes and lips. Use sparingly around ears.
- Do not apply repellant when you're near food.
- Ensure you are covered between dusk and dawn, the prime hours for disease-carrying mosquitoes and sand fleas.
- Wash treated skin with soap and water when you're no longer exposed to biting insects.
- Replace or treat ACU's with permethrin every six months or 25 washes, whichever is sooner.
- Wear your uniform properly tuck pants into boots, tuck T-shirt into pants, roll sleeves down.

Headline Highlights

Super Bowl shirts; mass Mexican marriage

'Winning' Super Bowl shirts end up in Nicaragua

MANAGUA (Reuters) — Shirts and caps proclaiming the victory of the New England Patriots — when the American football team actually lost the latest Super Bowl — have ended up in the hands of poor Nicaraguan children.

Hundreds of shirts and caps, which had been manufactured in advance to celebrate the Patriots' expected victory over the New York Giants, were handed over to children in the southern city of Diriamba.

"The children are the winners," said Miriam Diaz, of World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization. World Vision has links with the NFL, and every year helps out poor children in Latin America and Africa with the unwanted "winners" shirts of the team that actually loses the Super Bowl.

Winners' shirts and other garments are produced in advance so players and fans can put them on to celebrate immediately after the final whistle of the game. Garments of the losing team are obviously unwanted. The Giants stunned the previously undefeated Patriots 17-14 in this year's Super Bowl.

Migrants hold mass wedding

TIJUANA, Mexico (Reuters) — Nearly 600 Mexican couples tied the knot in a mass Valentine's Day wedding by the U.S. border on Thursday, many of them undocumented migrants who met while working illegally in the United States.

As a live band blasted out sugary Mexican love songs in the border city of Tijuana, a short walk from the busy San Ysidro crossing into California, a judge simultaneously married a crowd of couples whose ages ranged from 16 to 65.

More than three-quarters were migrants returning from, or trying to get into, the United States.

"Isn't she gorgeous? I love her!" said Inocencio Felix of his new wife Angelica Perez, 36, dressed in a flouncy white wedding gown. Perez was deported by U.S. immigration officials two weeks ago from the state of Oregon, where the couple met.

Felix, also living in the United States illegally, said he came back to the Mexican border city of Tijuana, across from San Diego, voluntarily for the mass open-air wedding.

"We're going to go back to the United States soon, our life is there," he said, holding a heart-shaped pink balloon.

Thousands of Latin Americans try to cross into California every year from Mexico but the construction of a fence between Tijuana and San Diego, and increased workplace raids and deportations in the United States have swelled Tijuana's migrant population.

Many end up living in the seedy city for good. Mexico's civil registry office began the mass weddings several years ago with migrants in mind, and has seen the number of couples attending surge as deportation rates grow.

"Many migrants do not have any kind of documents, not even a registered birth certificate, so they cannot get married, but we try to resolve that," civil registry official Silvia Alvarez told Reuters, her voice drowned out by cheering newlyweds.

Subway ad irks passengers

BEIJING (Reuters) — An advertisement on Beijing's subway proclaiming "Squeezed in?! Go and buy a car then!" has angered passengers who said it only encourages traffic jams, a state newspaper said Friday.

The advertisement, written in large white letters on a red background, is also contrary to the Beijing city government's aim of getting more people to take public transport, the official Beijing Daily said.

"Isn't this out of tune with environmental protection?" it quoted a subway passenger surnamed Yang as saying.

"The company sees subway passengers as potential customers, but the scornful tone of the advertising language exposes a lack of interest in human feelings behind a meticulous design," a female passenger surnamed Liu added.

Some Internet users have come up with their own versions of the advertisement's slogan, the newspaper said, proposing: "Stuck in a traffic jam? Then take the subway!"

But the storm of criticism against the advert, which does not identify the company or organization behind it, may have just the effect the advertisers were looking for, the report added.

"If they only cared about getting eyeballs rather than the impact it would have on people and society, has it not been effective?" the newspaper quoted unnamed experts as saying.

Beijing is spending billions of dollars expanding and upgrading its subway network ahead of this year's Olympic

S u d o k

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1		7				3		6
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7	8			2		4	3	

from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to Saturday's puzzle:

4	2	5	7	3	1	6	9	8
8	7	1	9	4	6	3	2	5
3	9	6	5	2	8	4	1	7
6	3	4	1	8	5	9	7	2
2	8	7	4	6	9	5	3	1
5	1	9	2	7	3	8	6	4
1	4	8	6	9	2	7	5	3
9	5	3	8	1	7	2	4	6
7	6	2	3	5	4	1	8	9

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Speak

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