



Hospital Will Help Save Babies

SADR CITY — Extensive renovations will soon be complete at one of Sadr City’s major hospitals in east Baghdad.

Al Baladi Maternity and Children’s Hospital initially opened in 1982 and during the following two decades little was spent on routine maintenance, said Iraqi Project Engineer Mohammad Attar, who oversees the hospital’s upgrade for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“During Saddam’s time, patients there had to tolerate 100-degree-plus interior temperatures because the air conditioning system was broke,” he explained.

The \$12 million, three-year renovation included the installation of four new chillers, four cooling towers and four new boilers.

“Those improvements helped the elderly and infants, who have little tolerance for heat and cold. The hospital is now able to maintain a comfortable interior temperature in both summer and winter,” Attar noted.

Other improvements include an oxygen plant, central vacuum system, nurse call

[READ MORE](#)



Al Baladi Maternity and Children’s Hospital treats 150 to 200 patients daily, 80 percent of which are children. One of the hospital’s main goals is reducing the infant mortality rate in the area. U.S. Army photo by Norris Jones.

‘Rock Reaper’ Clears al-Qaida Strongholds

HADID — A dim blue light pierced the darkness as someone yelled “one-minute out”, but the voice was drowned out by noise from the rotating blades of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

The helicopter, carrying Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, approached its landing zone near the town of Hadid, 65 miles northwest of Baghdad.

As the light went out, the Soldiers braced themselves for a hard landing. Threats of anti-aircraft guns hidden in the palm groves surrounding the landing zone forced the helicopter pilots to land faster than they normally prefer

[READ MORE](#)

This Week in News ...

Sewer project will clean up streets

Tankers learn how to patrol in Humvees



Press Conference: Operational Update, Jan 2

Reconstruction Report: The latest from USACE.

Hot Item: MNF-I Photo Gallery: Select Images from Iraq

Tribal Council Meets at Kalsu

FORWARD OPERATING BASE

KALSU — Members of the North Babil Tribal Council (NBTC) met at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Jan. 3, to discuss matters of regional importance with Iraqi security forces (ISF) leaders and the Vanguard Brigade leadership.

The NBTC first met in October, 2006, as a means of linking all the sheiks in the North Babil area, and thereby keeping Coalition and Iraqi security forces informed.

The group of U.S. troops, Iraqi police, Iraqi Army Soldiers and tribal leaders discussed infrastructure projects, security, and efforts to legitimize the Concerned Local Citizens programs.

The Iraqi police made a strong showing at the meeting, as they provided security on the convoy to FOB Kalsu, and the Iraqi Army leadership led discussions on regional security.

“The Iraqi Army has enormous capability, but there’s still some equipment they need” said Col. Thomas James, commander of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

“The older battalions have more equipment and training, but they’re all great units.”

[READ MORE](#)



Mosques such as this one are visible throughout the city. The Iraqi Police and Marines of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, have provided much of the security needed to complete rebuilding inside the city. Photo by Cpl. Ryan M. Blaich, U.S.M.C.

Marines Back: See Fallujah Grow

FALLUJAH — It is hard to imagine someone never hearing of this city or of the house-to-house fighting that has taken place here since the war began. U.S. military officials called it “the heaviest urban combat since the battle of Hue City in Vietnam,” nearly 40 years ago.

During the early winter months of 2004, Fallujah was at the center of a joint U.S. military and Iraqi offensive against insurgents led by Marines of I Marine Expeditionary Force. Prior to the offensive operation inside the city limits on Nov. 7, there hadn’t been a U.S. military presence since April 2004.

This gave insurgents time to build up defensive positions, booby trap houses, plant roadside bombs and scope out sniper positions from towering mosques. This made Fallujah overwhelmingly dangerous

and deadly, and for more than a month, Marines and Iraqi commandos battled in the fiercest skirmishes this war has seen.

The operation, know as Al Fajr, “the dawn” in Arabic, ended Dec. 23, 2004. Now, three years later, some of the same Marines who were a part of the devastating clashes are back, this time to rebuild the city and help locals who have recently began moving back into their homes. Arriving less than three months ago, Marines of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, are back to finish what they started.

Although there is a dramatic change in the way they carry out daily operations compared to Al Fajr, they remain focused on keeping the enemy out of the city.

[READ MORE](#)

Freedom Journal Iraq: Video dispatches from the War on Terror



New Iraqi Air Operations Center



Operational Update



Update on Missing Soldiers