



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Interactive Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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Iraqis assume control in Najaf

NAJAF – The security and governance of nearly 1 million An Najaf citizens was officially transferred to Provincial Iraqi Control in a ceremony here in southern Iraq Dec. 20.

“Today we are saying no to sectarianism, and no terrorism, and yes for peace, and yes for freedom, and yes for democracy,” said As’ad Abu-Galal al-Taai, the governor of An Najaf province, to a crowd of several hundred Iraqis gathered in the city’s soccer stadium for the ceremony.

In June 2005, Iraq’s Prime Minister announced a joint decision between the Iraqi government and Multinational Forces – Iraq to systematically hand over security responsibilities to Iraq’s provinces to provincial civil authorities under the control of each province’s

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Iraqi Police officers march in formation during the Provincial Iraqi Control ceremony in Najaf Wednesday. Najaf is the third province to come under Provincial Iraqi Control.

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[Trainers tell SecDef progress is good](#)



Commander's Commentary:



A season of hope for all

By Gen. George Casey, Commander, MNF-I

Our recent celebrations of religious holidays provide opportunities to

honor and reflect upon what is important to us. We are indeed fortunate to be able to

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Reconstruction Report: [Read the latest from the Corps of Engineers.](#)

Operations Review: [Coalition, Iraqi Forces detain several suspects.](#)

Engineers improve oil exporting capabilities

BASRAH — Many new opportunities and important development projects in the southern oil fields of Iraq

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working on various projects to ramp up oil production for the newly democratic country and help improve Iraq's economy.

One important project is the al Basrah Oil Terminal, formerly known as Mina Al-Baker and now called "ABOT," and is considered to be the gateway to Iraq's prosperity.

"Right now oil is Iraq's major export. It isn't easy to increase oil exports, but the Corps has plans of

raising the crude output to meet 3 million barrels per day in 2007," said Bob Tillisch, oil program manager with the Basrah Area Office of Gulf Region South District.

He said experts estimate Iraq has about 115 billion barrels of oil reserves, concentrated mainly in the south.

"The main objective of the ABOT development project is to create a strong and reliable source of income for Iraq, improve Iraqi living conditions, and creates new opportunities for employment,"



The Al Basrah Oil Terminal, or ABOT, is Iraq's principle export facility located near the Persian Gulf.

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Freedom Journal Iraq

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Iraqi Police meet the neighbors



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[Press Conference: MNF-I spokesman Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV and Iraqi Government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh answer the media's questions.](#)

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