

U.S. soldier dead, 7 injured in ambush

U.S. soldiers came under attack on Monday in Iraq while they were escorting 15 children to school

By Jeff Wilkinson
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

FALLUJAH, Iraq — One U.S. soldier of the 82nd Airborne Division was killed and seven others were injured Monday while escorting children to school, a spokesman for the division said.

The dead soldier was the third killed in action in the so-called "Sunni Triangle" in two days and the 104th to die in battle since May 1, when President Bush declared an end to major combat operations.

Soldiers patrolling the tribal towns west and north of Baghdad in recent weeks have increasingly come under attack from roadside bombs and guerrillas armed with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades.

In Fallujah on Monday, the soldiers — members of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment — were escorting 15 children to school at about 1 p.m. when they got out of their Humvees to check a large, trouble-prone intersection for roadside bombs, said Staff Sgt. Rodrick Stallings, a public affairs officer with the 82nd Airborne.

"They got ready to remount and there was an explosion," he said. "We're not sure what it was."

The unit came under immediate small-arms fire, but no other soldiers were injured in the firefight,



Travis Heying KRT

A crane removes the remains of an American ammunition truck in Fallujah, Iraq, on Tuesday after it was hit by a roadside bomb.

Stallings said.

None of the children was hurt, he said.

The soldiers searched three houses in the area and detained 13 people for questioning, Stallings said. He had no information about the number of Iraqis who may have been killed or wounded.

In what may be a related incident, at least one Iraqi was killed and another seriously wounded when U.S. soldiers fired on a truck, Iraqi police said.

The truck driver, Merair Mohammed Farhan, 50, said he was driving up the main Baghdad-Fallujah highway near the Fallujah mosque when U.S. soldiers opened fire from behind a bulldozer.

"They destroyed the truck. I got shot," Farhan said from Fallujah General Hospital, his head and chest covered with bloody bandages. "The soldiers pulled me out of the truck. I was bleeding. There was blood covering me. The soldiers kept checking

me to see if I was alive.

"There was no reason to shoot me," he said. "This is just like Israel."

Iraqi police identified the dead man as Nadum al Esawi. A policeman said that several other people were injured and taken to another hospital.

Stallings had no information on that incident.

(c) 2003, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

Report examines 'aggressive' U.S. tactics

Human Rights Watch has released information that questions the circumstances of civilian casualties in Iraq

By E.A. Torriero
Chicago Tribune (KRT)

BAGHDAD, Iraq — For more than two months, Naiel Saleem Abdul Kareem could not confirm whether his sister was dead or alive, despite witness accounts that she had been shot by American soldiers in one of the summer's most publicized killings of Iraqi civilians.

Then in late September, U.S. authorities called Kareem and told him to come to the morgue to retrieve the bullet-riddled body of the 74-year-old woman.

"Why did I have to wait so long?" Kareem asked. "I think (the U.S. military) postponed giving her to me to calm down the situation. They don't want people to know how they killed her."

Klemantine Saleem's death was one of 20 cases of civilian casualties examined in a report to be released Tuesday by Human Rights Watch, the most comprehensive such probe so far compiled by a governmental or non-governmental agency.

The report, which examined deaths that occurred since President Bush declared the end of major combat in Iraq on May 1, charges that the U.S.-led military coalition is often reluctant to investigate civilian deaths, is not careful enough to prevent them and has failed to provide an accounting of the casualties. The human rights group alleges that many of the deaths were caused by overly aggressive U.S. military actions.

Despite being provided a copy of the 56-page report before publication, the U.S.-led coalition said through its military spokesman that it has not read it and would not comment on its contents.

Human Rights Watch alleges that a detailed review of the cases "reveals a pattern by U.S. forces of over-aggressive tactics, indiscriminate shooting in residential areas and a quick reliance on lethal force."

Very few civilian deaths by U.S. fire are investigated, Human Rights Watch says, and no one has an accurate count of civilian casualties. The U.S.-led coalition counters that the figures are "unknowable."

In Baghdad alone, the report estimates that there have been at least 94 Iraqi deaths under "questionable legal circumstances that merit investigation."

Hundreds of innocent Iraqis have been killed at checkpoints or caught in the crossfire in incidents outside the capital, human rights advocates say.

"Just the fact that the U.S. military doesn't track civilian deaths indicates that they do not seem to care," said Joe Stork, acting executive director of the Middle East and North Africa division at Human Rights Watch.

"There needs to be a process of inquiry and a self-examination by the U.S. military," Stork said. "That is not happening."

As coalition forces came under increasing fire this summer from anti-American insurgents, the dangers for civilians increased when soldiers went on the defensive, the report notes.

Human Rights Watch acknowledges that in some cases of civilian deaths, U.S. forces faced "a real threat," but the group said that the response was "sometimes disproportionate."

U.S. Lt. Col. George Krivo said the coalition welcomes outside review and officials regret the deaths of civilians, but he denied the allegation that excessive force has been used.

"We use appropriate force given the situation on the ground at the time, and we use that force in order to protect innocent Iraqi lives and coalition lives," said Krivo, the coalition mili-

tary spokesman.

When charges are raised against U.S. soldiers, the military looks into them, Krivo said.

"We take investigations very seriously, and any time there is the possibility that a soldier has done something inappropriate or unlawful, we do take the proper action," he said.

The Human Rights Watch report, however, says that as of Oct. 1 the U.S. military has announced the completion of only five investigations since May 1.

In four incidents, the military found that soldiers acted "within the rules of engagement," the report said. In a fifth case, a helicopter pilot and commander face disciplinary action after removing a banner from a prominent Shiite building.

"Iraq is clearly a hostile environment for U.S. troops," Stork said. "But that does not absolve the military from its legal obligations to use force in a restrained and proportionate manner — and only when necessary."

The report comes as human rights lawyers and advocates are seeking compensation for Iraqi lives lost.

(c) 2003, Chicago Tribune. Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services. Bill Glauber and Deborah Horan contributed to this report.

McKENZIE RIVER GOLF COURSE

We invite you to play our beautiful golf course along the scenic McKenzie River, with immaculate greens and a mature, manicured landscape.

Located off Deerhorn Road Hwy. 126 to Holden Creek, cross bridge to Golf Course.

See why we are the jewel on the river. 41723 Madrone 896-3454

Weekdays Mon-Fri
\$10 - 9 holes
\$17 - 18 holes with UO ID

Premier Travel

Airfare Specials!!!

Frankfurt	\$362.00*
Paris	\$466.00*
Helsinki	\$539.00*
Sydney	\$841.00*

*tax not included, restrictions may apply. Subject to change without notice.

Eurail Passes issued on-site!!!
E-mail: fares@luv2travel.com

1011 Harlow
747-0909
Student Travel Experts

FALLING PRICES SALE

SAVE 20% on 2003 Gunnar Roadie Frames

SAVE 40% ON DEMOS High end Treks and Fishers in excellent condition.

25% off 2002 models in stock

TREK NAVIGATOR 300
Reg \$399 sale \$339

01 KONA SCAB
list \$599 sale \$389

PAUL'S 2480 Alder & 152 W 5th & Oasis Plaza

Upgrade your Résumé to Professional Strength
Career Center
 220 Hendricks Hall • (541)346-3235 • <http://uocareer.uoregon.edu>
 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS PAPER.