

# Gloomy Assessment for Troop Levels

## Military expects to maintain or increase force

(AP) -- The U.S. military is likely to maintain and may even increase its force of more than 140,000 troops in Iraq through next spring, the top American commander in the region said Tuesday in one of the gloomiest assessments yet of when troops may come home.

Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, said military leaders would consider adding troops or extending the Iraq deployments of other units if needed.

"If it's necessary to do that because the military situation on the ground requires that, we'll do it," Abizaid said. "If we have to call in more forces because it's our military judg-

ment that we need more forces, we'll do it."

His comments came as violence around Iraq killed at least 16 civilians on Tuesday and wounded dozens of others. Iraqi lawmakers angered by the relentless violence demanded that the defense and interior ministers appear before parliament to explain what they are doing to eliminate the death squads that have claimed hundreds of Iraqi lives.

The U.S. military said a U.S. soldier was killed Tuesday by a suicide car bomber in northern Iraq, another died of non-battle related injuries on Monday, and two others were killed Sunday. Abizaid said that right now

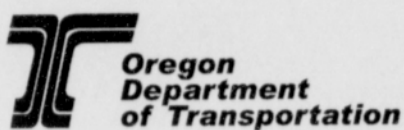
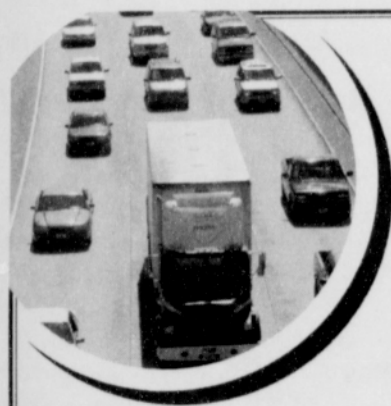


U.S. soldiers secure the site of a car bomb explosion in Iraq Tuesday. (AP photo)

the number of U.S. troops "are prudent force levels" that are achieving the needed military effect.

Still, his blunt assessment was the first time officials confirmed that higher troops levels would continue into next year — and it came as U.S. political leaders heading into November's congressional elections face declining public support for the war in Iraq.

President Bush, in New York for U.N. General Assembly meetings on Tuesday, told Iraqi President Jalal Talabani that the U.S. will keep soldiers in Iraq as long as necessary. Late last year, military leaders had said they hoped to reduce troop levels to about 100,000 by the end of this year. But Abizaid said Tuesday that the rising sectarian violence and slow progress of the Iraqi government made that impossible.



### ODOT IS KEEPING OREGON ON THE MOVE

Major construction is under way on Interstate 5.

The Oregon Department of Transportation is investing in Oregon's economy and infrastructure with nearly \$3 billion in highway construction projects. Construction over the next five years will be the heaviest Oregon has seen since the interstate system was built 50 years ago.

Oregon remains open for business as ODOT manages traffic to keep motorists on the move. Scheduling work at night and during off-peak hours helps ease congestion. The agency is also planning ahead to minimize delays for events such as university football games in Eugene and Corvallis.

Still, some delays are unavoidable. For up-to-date information about construction and traffic on I-5 and around the state, visit TripCheck.com or call 5-1-1.

**SLOW DOWN!  
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## Three Dead Confronting Police

Three confrontations with police have left three Oregon men dead over the course of three days.

Police said they shot and killed Devon Linville, 35, of La Pine, after he attacked an officer with a knife. It happened Friday night in the central Oregon town during a domestic violence complaint.

Lukas Glenn, a former Tigard High School football player was shot and killed after wielding a knife the following Saturday night outside his parents' house in unincorporated Washington County. Deputies said they feared for the safety of the homes' occupants.

A third man died Sunday night in the custody of Portland Po-

lice. The 42-year-old man was taken into custody after a Portland officer made contact with him at Northwest 13th Avenue and Everett Street, describing the man as "extremely combative."

Chief Rosie Sizer said she expected detectives to spend at least two days interviewing officers, at least five, involved.

## Minority Businesses Celebrated

The accomplishments of minority and women-owned businesses in Portland and the surrounding area will be featured at the Minority Enterprise Development Week tradeshow and luncheon.

Representatives from agencies and businesses looking to partner, network and exchange ideas will attend the event on Wednesday, Oct. 4 from 10 a.m. to



Melvin Gravely II

3 p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

The tradeshow will also showcase Dr. Melvin Gravely II, founder of the Institute for Entrepreneurial Thinking, as keynote speaker. Gravely has authored six books, including "When Black and White Makes Green: The Next Evolution in Business and Race."

## Senior Meal Drivers Needed

Loaves & Fishes Centers, the Meals-On-Wheels People, is seeking volunteer drivers to ensure homebound seniors in the downtown Portland area receive nutritious meals and a bit of companionship. The agency will reimburse volunteer drivers for their mileage.

"These volunteers are so invaluable because they not only help us feed our frail elderly, but they make sure these seniors see a friendly face at least once a week.

Sometimes the Meals-On-Wheels driver is the only person these homebound seniors see all day," said David Lomax with the Martin Luther King Jr. Loaves & Fishes Center.

Meals-On-Wheels are delivered Monday through Friday between 10:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. Drivers must be at least 18 years old and have a valid driver's license.

For more information, call Lomax at 503-988-5211.

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CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt

OFFICE MANAGER: Kathy Linder

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