

"They were taught the basics of shooting a firearm, as well as how to put rounds down range and pray they hit the target," added Johnson.

According to police captain Sammad Al Hayani, Iraqi police rarely practiced with a weapon in the past.

"There were no shooting and no good pistols before," he said.

Iraqi police rarely practiced with a weapon in the past.

Basics of marksmanship included such fundamentals as breath control, sight alignment, and the proper way to squeeze the trigger. On the range, the Iraqi police participated in target shooting from three distances, with the longest distance being 15 meters using Glock 19 Series pistols.

"The police officers really had no idea of the weapons' capabilities, and they had no confidence in their own abilities," said Johnson. "It is good to see them gain more confidence. I expect they will become a more valuable asset as their weapons skills increase."

RENOVATING TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS

School children in grades 1 through 6 recently returned to two newly renovated primary schools in the Abu Ghraib area of western Baghdad. A team from the 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Abilene, Texas, managed the renovations and repairs at the two schools, Ruqia Primary School and al-Fayda Primary School.

Capt. Thane Thompson, a team chief for the 490th who hails from Monterey, California, was the officer in charge of the project.

"The coalition is doing a lot of positive restoration work, and the vast majority of Iraqis that we deal with are extremely appreciative," said Thompson.

More than \$80,000 was spent on the repairs and renovations at the two schools. The Ruqia school project cost \$34,000, while the al-Fayda school project cost \$46,000. The funding was provided by the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit based in Riverdale, Maryland, and came from the Commanders' Emergency Relief Funds.

Immediately following the main combat phase of the war, both schools were completely looted. All of the furniture and equipment had been stolen, and even the doors and windows, as well as all light fixtures, wiring and switches, were removed and taken elsewhere. All that was left were the walls and the roofs. So the schools were unusable until the Army Reserve arrived.

"My team coordinated the project from start to finish. We conducted the initial assessments defining the scope of work, found contractors to help with cost estimates, prepared the funding proposals and got the funding approved, and contracted with local construction companies to do the work," said Thompson.

"We also did quality control inspections every couple of days and paid the contractors for their work," he added.

In both cases, the work included masonry, grounds maintenance, windows and glass replacement, interior finishing, and plumbing and electricity.

The commander of the 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, Lt. Col. Donna Hinton, cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the Ruqia School, stating: "This is a happy day for everyone. The children are happy to have a good school to go to, the school staff are extremely appreciative, and the Soldiers are satisfied that they have accomplished a great work."

300007