



For Immediate Release
July 27, 2008
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ameriya Technical High School will offer opportunities for a new generation

By Polli Keller
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The \$615 thousand renovation and expansion of the Ameriya Technical High School in the Mansour District of Baghdad will provide vocational technical training for high school students. [USACE Photo]

Baghdad, Iraq –The \$615 thousand renovation and expansion of the Ameriya Technical High School in the Mansour District of Baghdad will soon provide vocational technical training for high school students.

“This school is very important,” said Mohammed Abdullah, the U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers, Gulf Region Central district’s International Zone project engineer. “It will have a great impact on the families who cannot afford to send their children to universities. They will learn a profession to earn a living.”

As the executor of the contract, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region

Division over watch the contracting and construction management/quality assurance of the over-all project, while local contractors do the construction.

The renovation of the main building where the classical education is taught began in August 2007. Architecturally, the 43-year-old building with 32 classrooms was re-plastered inside and out, walls were painted and tiles were repaired and replaced. All windows were inspected and replaced where necessary, as was the fence around the school which was raised to 2.5 meters. External lighting was added and the tiled recreation area between the buildings was extended.

Electrically, the building was upgraded and hooked into the city's electrical grid. A new generator and fuel tank were installed to allow continuous operation of the facility and each classroom received four fluorescent lights, as well as a new heating, ventilating and air conditioning

window unit that cools in the summer and heats in the winter.

Renovations were also made to the school's plumbing and then connected to the city's water and sewage systems. Restrooms were repaired, new fixtures were installed and four new one cubic meter potable water tanks were delivered for the roof, as well as sunshades to cover them.

In addition to renovating the existing building, two additional out buildings were constructed on site, adding four large classrooms for technical training and additional restroom facilities.

Abdullah said construction for this project was slow due to the security situation. Four months after the renovations to the main building were complete an insurgent group moved into the school. He explained that construction of the out buildings continued but, "workers were hard to come by because of the security issues."



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With the troop surge of U.S. forces in 2007, the security situation improved in Baghdad and the insurgents moved out. Assessments of the facility were made and modifications were added to the contract to repair the damages the insurgents left behind.

"This particular construction project is a tangible representation of perseverance and commitment to the reconstruction of Iraq," said Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division. "Our GRD team does not terminate a construction project because challenges emerge. We find solutions to continue on delivering construction for the Iraqi people."

Ameriya School is now 87 percent finished and scheduled for completion by the end of the year. Desks, computers and other school supplies are starting to arrive.

Currently GRD has completed 1,079 schools in Iraq at the cost of \$201 million and there are 39 more in progress.



Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division speaks with the local contractor concerning the renovation progress of Ameriya Technical High School. "This particular construction project is a tangible representation of perseverance and commitment to the reconstruction of Iraq," said Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar. "Our GRD team does not terminate a construction project because challenges emerge. We find solutions to continue on delivering construction for the Iraqi people." [USACE Photo]

Note: Polli Barnes Keller is a public affairs officer with the Gulf Region Division district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact Polli at (540) 665-5344 or email requests to CEGRD.PAO@usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.