41 Nations Gather in Bahrain for IMCMEX 13

By U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs

MANAMA, Bahrain — Representatives from 41 nations have assembled in Bahrain to prepare for two solid weeks of a cooperative exercise in the Gulf Region.

International Mine Countermeasures Exercise (IMCMEX) 13, May 6-30 is the largest exercise of its kind in the region and will exercise a wide spectrum of defensive operations designed to protect international commerce and trade; mine countermeasures, maritime security operations (MSO) and maritime infrastructure protection (MIP).

“We are very pleased to see that more than 40 nations have joined us here to take part in this opportunity to enhance international naval capability to preserve freedom of navigation in international waterways,” said Vice Admiral John W. Miller, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet. “If 41 nations are willing to come here and practice MCM, just imagine how effective the global mine response would be if someone actually put mines in the water.”

Participating nations began staging and staff integration May 6 for the afloat phase of the exercise to begin next week. 35 ships, 18 Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs) and more than 100 explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) divers will deploy as participants during the exercise events of IMCMEX 13.

IMCMEX 13 is hosted by U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT)/U.S. 5th Fleet and will be conducted in three phases: a three-day symposium on maritime infrastructure protection, an afloat operations phase, and a re-integration phase where participants discuss best practices and lessons learned for future exercises.

Similar to last year, participants will exercise the afloat staging base concept aboard USS Ponce (AFSB(I) 15) and RFA Cardigan Bay (L3009), and will cover surface mine countermeasures, mine hunting and airborne mine countermeasures operations, international explosive ordnance disposal training, diving operations, small-boat exercises, unmanned aerial vehicle operations, unmanned underwater vehicle operations and port clearance operations.

New to this year’s exercise, MSO will introduce shipping escort and visit, board, search, and seize operations which will include representatives from maritime shipping industry who were involved in exercise planning and will play a significant role in shipping escort events. Industry representatives will also lead an oil spill response table-top discussion during the exercise.

The MIP portion of the exercise focuses on protecting maritime points of origin and arrival, such as ports or offshore terminals. This portion of the exercise will include shore and harbor security operations; visit, board, search and seizure teams; and specialized aircraft.

NAVCENT is responsible for approximately 2.5 million square miles of area including the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, parts of the Indian Ocean and 20 countries.

NSA Bahrain’s Softball Team Places in Dubai

By Weam M. Ahmed
Staff Writer

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, Bahrain — Members of Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bahrain’s softball team participated in the Middle East Softball Championship (MESC) 2013 in Dubai, May 1-4.

“MESC 2013 was dubbed as ‘A little slice of American in the Middle East’,” said Electronics Technician 1st Class James Warren. “Teams from all over the Middle East prepare the entire year to get ready for four grueling days of intense softball play.”

Twenty three teams participated in this year’s championship. The participating teams came from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Dubai, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain.
Hagel Announces Fewer Furlough Days for DOD Employees

By Nick Simeone and Karen Parrish, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (NNS) — After weeks of review, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has concluded budget cuts will require most of the department’s civilian employees to be furloughed beginning in July, but that because of other efforts to deal with the shortfall, only half of the 22 days originally envisioned as temporary layoffs will now be necessary.

During a town hall meeting today at the Mark Center in Alexandria, Va., Hagel told Defense Department employees that most will be required to take 11 furlough days beginning July 8, one per pay period, through the end of the fiscal year, Sept. 30.

Hagel noted that when he took the oath of office less than three months ago, post-sequester plans called for 22 furlough days. Congress allowed the department to shift or reprogram some funds in March that cut that number to 14. Now, he said, as maintenance, training, flying hours and ship deployments are increasingly affected, he had no choice but to authorize the furloughs.

“We kept going back. And finally, we got to a point where I could not responsibly go any deeper into cutting or jeopardizing our formations, our readiness and training,” he said.

In a memo to senior department leaders, Hagel said he had “very reluctantly” concluded that major budgetary shortfalls triggered by a $37 billion cut in defense spending for fiscal year 2013 forced a decision he said he deeply regrets, and one that he acknowledged will disrupt lives and impact DOD operations.

However, he credited congressional passage of a defense appropriation bill in March in part for helping to reduce from the number of days civilians would be temporarily laid off by half.

“It may be possible later in the year to “knock that back” to an even lower number, the secretary said, but he emphasized that he could not promise such an outcome.

“I won’t promise that,” Hagel said. “You deserve fair, honest, direct conversation about this, and I’m not going to be cute with you at all. This is where we are. We’ll continue to look at it, and we’ll continue to do everything we can.”

Hagel said the furloughs will affect every military department and almost every agency, with limited exceptions. “We will except civilians deployed to combat zones and civilians necessary to protect life and property,” he wrote in his memo, adding that others will be excepted if forcing them to stay off the job would not free up money for other needs.

Employees set to be furloughed will begin receiving written notification June 5. In March, defense officials had told civilian employees to expect as many as 22 furlough days during the current fiscal year, part of departmentwide efforts to slash spending in response to across-the-board budget cuts known as sequestration.

In the time since, Hagel has been working to avoid or reduce the temporary layoffs, saying he had sought advice from department leaders and agencies, both civilian and military, but found no other way to help in closing the budget gap.

In his memo today, Hagel said if the budget situation eases, he would strongly prefer to end the furloughs early. “That is a decision I will make later in the year,” he added.

For more information on visas and CPR cards, contact Immigration at 1785-4258.

LEGAL CORNER
LN1(SW) Shenika Mayes

SPECIAL POWER OF ATTORNEY (POA) TO ACT “IN LOCO PARENTIS”

The phrase “in loco parentis” means “in the place of the parent.” This type of POA grants parental authority to another (such as a caregiver) to perform a range of functions which include picking up a child from school, buying food and clothing, and consenting to medical treatment of a child in the event of illness or injury. Without this POA, a day care center, school, hospital, or clinic may refuse to follow the directives of the caregiver.

Active-duty single parents or dual military couples who are deploying should obtain a special power of attorney for their child/children’s caregiver. The caregiver may then assume the duties and responsibilities of a parent without formal adoption procedures. It is recommended that all military members stationed OCONUS or in remote locations who have children maintain documentation for “in loco parentis” situations.

If you have any questions about this topic or wish to obtain this type of POA, please contact our front desk at 439-4237.
The NSA Bahrain team included 11 men and 17 women of Navy, Army, and Marine Corps forces who played 19 games.

“Every year, NSA conducts a tryout for the teams, and the top 15 men and women are chosen to represent NSA Bahrain,” said Warren.

Throughout the year NSA Bahrain’s team plays against teams from the ships that pull into port in Bahrain. In the past 3 years, NSA Bahrain has not lost against any visiting ship, according to Warren.

“These men and women played through the intense heat and pain of non-stop games,” said Warren. NSA Bahrain played in the men’s, women’s and the coed categories in four days of softball action that began at colors and didn’t stop until midnight.

The men’s team finished in the second place overall, losing the championship game by one run in extra innings against Dubai Diablo’s, whereas the women’s team acquired the third place.

“The championship game was the hardest game we played, well fought by both teams. We played extra innings. Nobody was willing to give the game away to the opponent,” said Warren.

“All of us were extremely proud to represent not only NSA, but to be the only Armed Forces team there gave us immense pride,” said Warren.

Aviation Mechanist’s 2nd Class Jordan Griggs, assigned to HM-15, hits a home run on the third night of play.

NSA Bahrain men’s team during a routine infield play. NSA Bahrain was one of 23 teams at the competition.

NSA Bahrain from Page 1

For more information, call x-3531

All dates and times are subject to change

Comments & Suggestions

All are welcome to send comments or suggestions to MWR Bahrain. Please e-mail them to: MWRSuggestionBox@me.navy.mil

If you would like to receive MWR Bahrain’s e-mail announcements, just send your official e-mail to the above address.

For more information, call the Liberty Center at 439-3192