

a question about this. He's in Iraq - he's an Iraqi who's here in the UK and his name is Haider Al-Najjar. Haider what would you like to ask General Kimmitt?

Haider Al-Najjar: Hi there. I'd like to ask Brigadier Kimmitt about military issues because he's a military man. First of all I'd like to ask about the wedding bombing which was independently verified by journalists from the Associated Press.

Yet, Brigadier Kimmitt, made the comment that bad guys have parties too, which was as inappropriate as it was irrelevant because there were women and children present, whether they were bad guys or not is irrelevant. Under the Geneva Convention you are not allowed to attack such a gathering.

And second quick comment is on the Abu Graib scandal which, as it turns out, isn't limited to Abu Graib - we're hearing about Nasiriya, we're hearing about Qaim and about other places - and most of us Iraqis were more than happy when Saddam was taken out by the US military and we were willing to tolerate the US presence because we are grateful for them removing Saddam. However, these scandals have done irreparable damage to the reputation of the US military in Iraq.

General Kimmitt: Well look, sure let me address those first of all and it's important to understand the background of the wedding party or whatever it was.

The fact remains we have seen video that talks about a wedding, it was during the daylight hours and it looked like there was a wedding going on at some location.

The operation that we ran was 75 kilometres south of al-Qaim, about five miles from the Syrian border. We conducted that operation at one o'clock in the morning. We suspect there might have been some sort of celebration going on but the ground forces that we had at that location said they didn't find any indications that there was a wedding going on. There were no wedding presents, there was no nuptial tent, there was no food - there were no indications that there had been a wedding there in the previous hours.

It could have happened there could have been some sort of celebration six hours prior, there could have been a wedding that went on during the daylight hours, as we saw in those videos. But at the time we conducted the operation, the time we'd sent our soldiers through that, the casualties were military aged men and a handful of women, none of the men had any kind of identification on them, there was a significant amount of property inside the location that indicated that what we had was in fact a foreign fighters safe house.

There were about 350 different sets of clothes, pre-packaged, that it would appear to us that the foreign fighters would come from out of the country, trade their clothes there for Iraqi clothing and move on. A significant amount of weapons, satellite communications, what may be drugs, there was a complete miniature hospital at that location.