

Marines serving with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit disembark USS Makin Island at Changi Naval Base in Singapore Dec. 12 to begin a training exercise. The Camp Pendleton-, Calif., based unit deployed from San Diego Nov. 14 and arrived in Singapore Dec. 12 as part of a regularly scheduled deployment to the Western Pacific and Middle East regions. *Cpl. Gene Allen Ainsworth III*

## Unit visits Asia partners

*Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore host deployment's first exercises*

*By 11th MEU Public Affairs*

Marines and sailors of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit came ashore from amphibious ships for cooperative exercises in Singapore, Cambodia and Malaysia beginning Dec. 11.

The exercises focused on community outreach events, jungle fa-

miliarization, medical subject matter exchanges and platoon and company movements.

"This was a great opportunity," said Col. Michael Hudson, the unit's commanding officer. "The venues and knowledge offered by our gracious hosts gave our Marines a

see EXERCISES, pg. 3

### CAMBODIA

## Three Khmers return to ancestral homeland

*By Cpl. Ryan Carpenter*

While the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit participated in an exercise in Cambodia Dec. 11-17, three unit members set foot on land their parents once called home.

Sgts. Sophearith Kann and Chanratha Lim, both from Long Beach, Calif., and Cpl. Sophanna Ken, a Boston native, grew up in the

see KHMERS, pg. 3



**SECNAV  
PAYS  
VISIT,  
Passes along holiday wishes**

### PHOTO ESSAY:

**A week  
with  
Cambodia's  
school  
children**



# U.S. Secretary of Navy visits unit

By Capt. Roger Hollenbeck

KUANTAN, Malaysia – Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus visited Marines and sailors participating in Exercise Kilat Eagle here Dec. 16.

U.S. Marines and sailors and Malaysian soldiers gathered in the rain to hear Mabus speak.

“I know you Marines are only happy when you are in the field, dirty and wet,” he said. “So you all have got to be having a great time out here.”

He interacted with Marine snipers and Malaysian mortar-men and saw an assault demonstration put on by Marines of Company I and the Malaysian 10th Parachute Brigade.

Mabus, accompanied by embassy personnel and high-ranking Malaysian officers, drove from Kuantan Air Base – where he arrived by plane – to the unit’s forward operating base in the Malaysian jungle. Here he was shown expeditionary solar-powered charging stations and spoke about the future of the Navy and Marine Corps.

He noted the importance of the Corps’ expeditionary heritage and the ability to be forward deployed.

Mabus answered questions from the Marines about what the future holds for the Marine Corps and how he views future threats. He also joined those in the field to record a holiday greeting to all service members and their families.



Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus visits Marines serving with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit’s Battalion Landing Team 3/1 in Kuantan, Malaysia, Dec. 16 during a bilateral training exercise between Marines and sailors of the unit and soldiers from the Malaysian Army. Capt. Roger Hollenbeck

“I know you Marines are only happy when you are in the field, dirty and wet.”

“The Navy and Marine Corps make the most formidable expeditionary fighting force the world has ever known, but being America’s away team – doing our jobs, forward-deployed, globally engaged in the defense of our country – means that many of you are far from home, and far from loved ones. It’s never easy, and it’s particularly hard during the holiday season. Whether you are afloat or ashore, whether you are far from home or at home, I want

to wish you a happy holiday from a very, very grateful nation.”

After saying farewell and wishing the Marines a safe deployment, the Secretary and entourage returned to Kuantan Air Base to catch their flight.

“It was a pleasure to showcase the great things the Marines and sailors of the Marine Expeditionary Unit are doing,” said unit commanding officer Col. Michael Hudson, who accompanied the secretary during

the tour. “Having the SecNav interacting with the Marines and sailors from the MEU, forward-deployed in Malaysia, was a tremendous opportunity for these amazing Americans to hear how important their commitment is.”

Kilat Eagle, a bilateral cooperative exercise between U.S. and Malaysian service members, allowed forces to exchange skills and experience training in a jungle environment in the Pacific.

## EXERCISES, from pg. 1

different kind of training as they stay sharp for their deployment as America’s premier fighting force in the littorals.”

There was bilateral air-to-air training with the Singapore Air Force, jungle survival with Malaysian counterparts and blood drives and community outreach projects in Cambodia. Small-unit sub-

ject matter exchanges during field training allowed the Marines and their hosts to share experiences and training in different environments, providing a unique training opportunity for all parties, said Hudson.

“It was good working with these professional warriors, in the air and on the ground. The MEU takes pride in sharing

what this agile, forward-deployed Marine air-ground-logistics team has to offer,” he said.

Members of the unit’s command and all three major subordinate elements participated. The subordinate elements are Battalion Landing Team 3/1, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced) and Combat Logistics Battalion 11.



Cpl. Sophanna Ken, left, meets an uncle, Maj. Pich Hon at Cambodia’s Peacekeeping Operations Training Center in Kampong Speo Dec. 13. Cpl. Ryan Carpenter



Sgt. Chanratha Lim, right, joins Lt. Col. Michael Wylie in greeting Cambodian Adm. Ouk Seyha at a ceremony Dec. 13. Cpl. Tommy Huynh

## CAMBODIA

### KHMERS, from pg. 1

United States after their families were forced to flee the genocidal rule of the Khmer Rouge from 1975–1979 and the almost two decades of civil war thereafter.

Kann, a Company L platoon guide, said his parents told him stories of the murders of innocent people perceived as educated, wealthy or artistic.

“It really affected them a lot,” said Kann. “They didn’t talk about the past that much, but when they did, it was about the killing fields.”

During the exercise, Ken, a Battery K crewman, met Pich Hon, an uncle serving as a major in the Royal Cambodian Army – a reunion Ken’s father back in the U.S. had set up by phone.

“It was my first time meeting him, but it felt like I had known him my entire life,” said Ken.

Hon, who carried a photograph of his nephew in his pocket, said, “I’ve wanted to meet him for a long time. I was very excited and delighted.”

Lim, a collateral duty inspector with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced), said that returning to his parents’ homeland was a life-changing experience: “I had always wanted to go and I was able to see more of the country than I had expected to see. It’s one thing to think about going back; it’s another thing to see it.”



Sgt. Sophearith Kann of Long Beach, Calif., above, and Cpl. Sophanna Ken of Boston. Cpl. Ryan Carpenter



Sgt. Chanratha Lim of Long Beach, Calif. Cpl. Tommy Huynh



Pacific Pride, an authorized government-funded publication, is published for informational purposes only and is not directive in nature. Contents of Pacific Pride are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps.

### 11TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT

COMMANDING OFFICER  
Col. Michael R. Hudson

EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
Lt. Col. Michael P. Wylie

SERGEANT MAJOR  
Sgt. Maj. Scott Pile

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
Capt. Roger Hollenbeck

### Volume 4.3, December 2011

Featuring theater-security cooperation exercises of the 2011-2012 deployment

The 11th MEU participated in exercises in Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore after transiting the Pacific Ocean aboard USS Makin Island, USS New Orleans and USS Pearl Harbor from San Diego beginning Nov. 14.

**MALAYSIA**

## U.S., Malaysian forces in Exercise Kilat Eagle soar

By Capt. Roger Hollenbeck

KUANTAN, Malaysia — Unit Marines and sailors conducted Exercise Kilat Eagle with elements of the Malaysian Army here Dec. 14-18, focusing on jungle training, air assault operations, a staff exchange and platoon and company movements.

“This was a golden opportunity,” said unit commanding officer Col. Michael Hudson. “Kilat Eagle reinforced our relationship with the Malaysian forces and provided a

unique training opportunity for all parties.”

During the exercise, Marines learned jungle survival and worked with their Malaysian counterparts to improve helicopter-borne assault techniques.

A staff exchange blended the experiences and functional areas of both countries’ forces.

The Marines and sailors taking part in the exercise came ashore from the amphibious assault ship Makin Island which departed its San Diego homeport Nov. 14.



Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilton gives Malaysian soldiers a class on helicopter raids in Kuantan, Malaysia, Dec. 17. Wilton serves with the unit’s ground-combat element, Battalion Landing Team 3/1. Cpl. Gene Allen Ainsworth III



A soldier serving with Malaysia’s Army Jungle Survival Wing teaches the Marines of Company I, Battalion Landing Team 3/1, how to use materials found in the jungle to start a fire. Staff Sgt. Chance W. Haworth

## Singapore Armed Forces host U.S. expeditionary unit

By Capt. Roger Hollenbeck

**SINGAPORE**

SINGAPORE — Unit Marines and sailors partnered with elements of the Singapore Armed Forces here Dec. 12 for a weeklong exercise that focused on bilateral air-to-air training, small-unit exchanges of expertise and urban training.

The training allowed the Marines and their Singaporean hosts to share experiences and best practices.

“We take pride in sharing all that this agile, forward-deployed Marine air-ground-logistics team has to offer,” said unit com-

manding officer Col. Michael Hudson.

The unit’s AV-8B Harrier pilots participated in Commando Sling, an exercise with the U.S. and Singapore air forces at Paya Lebar Air Base.

The ground training was primarily unit Marines and sailors sharpening their skills at the Murai Urban Training Facility and Mandai Range.

“This was a great opportunity,” said Hudson. “The venues and knowledge offered by our gracious hosts gave our Ma-

rines a different kind of training as they stay sharp for their deployment as America’s premier fighting force in the littorals.”

The Marines and sailors who took part in the exercise came ashore from the amphibious assault ship Makin Island which departed its San Diego homeport Nov. 14.

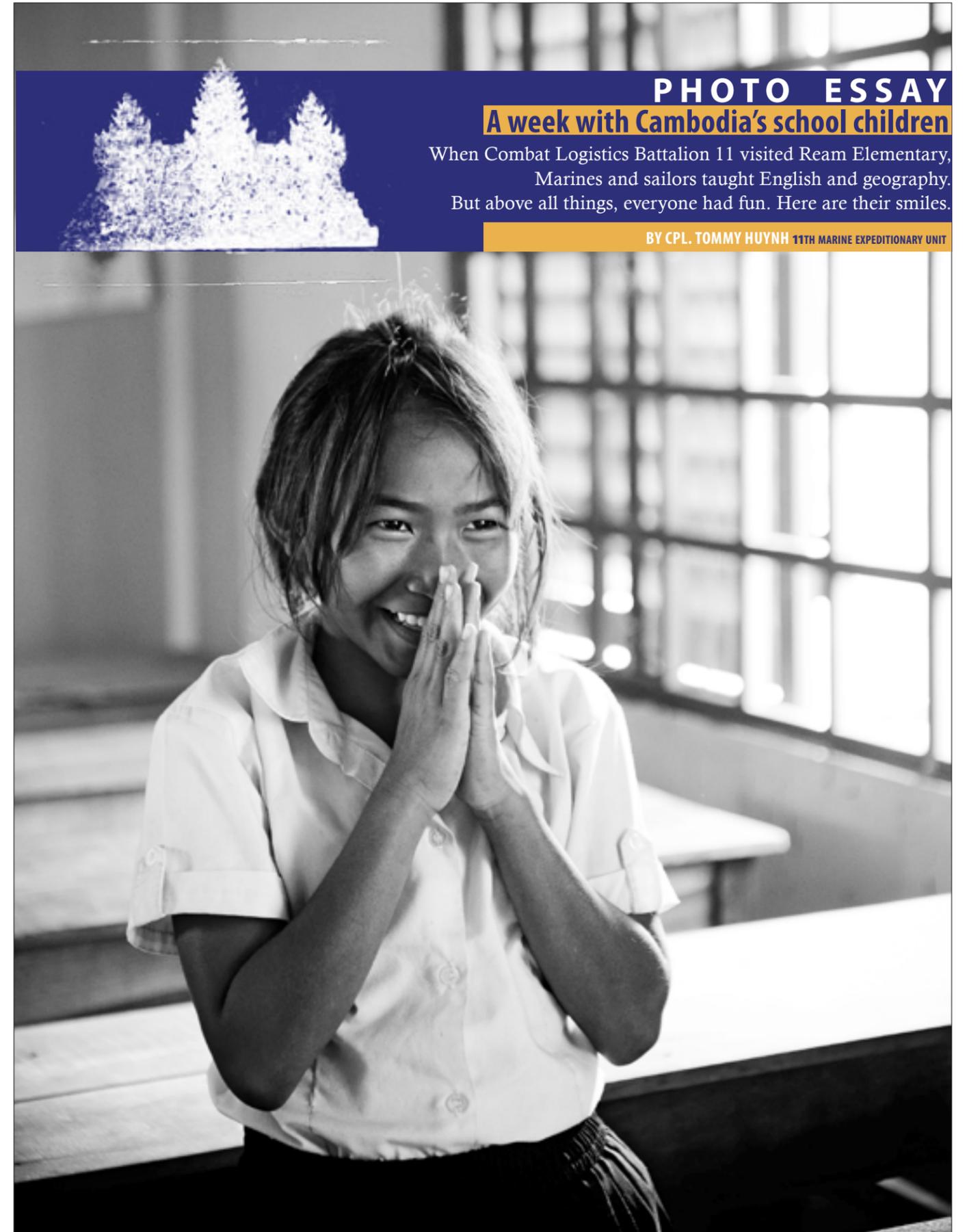
The unit, when teamed up at sea with Amphibious Squadron 5, makes up the Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group.

Major subordinate elements participating in the training were Battalion Landing Team 3/1, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced) and Combat Logistics Battalion 11.

**PHOTO ESSAY****A week with Cambodia’s school children**

When Combat Logistics Battalion 11 visited Ream Elementary, Marines and sailors taught English and geography. But above all things, everyone had fun. Here are their smiles.

BY CPL. TOMMY HUYNH 11TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT



**PHOTO ESSAY**  
BY CPL. TOMMY HUYNH





**PHOTO ESSAY**

BY CPL. TOMMY HUYNH



# Cambodians greet Marines ashore

*By Capt. Roger Hollenbeck*

**CAMBODIA**

REAM NAVAL BASE, Cambodia — Unit Marines and sailors came ashore from amphibious ships here Dec. 11 to begin a six-day cooperative exercise with the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

The exercise focused on maritime interdiction and medical subject-matter exchanges, mass-casualty response, community outreach, jungle familiarization and platoon- and company -sized movements in which Marines became familiar with jungle terrain.

“We welcomed the opportunity to work alongside the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and share with them all that this amphibious force has to offer,” said unit

executive officer Lt. Col. Michael P. Wylie, who also served as officer in charge of the participating Marines.

Marines, sailors and Cambodian forces participated in blood drives at military facilities and in a community outreach project at a local elementary school.

“Exposing a generation of Marines accustomed to life in the desert to the challenges of the jungle and tying in with local medical professionals to make a difference in the community will stay with these warriors for the rest of their lives,” said Wylie.

The Marines and sailors taking part in the exercise came ashore from the amphibious transport dock New Orleans and the



**Children salute U.S. Marines coming ashore at Ream Naval Base near Sihanoukville, Cambodia, Dec. 11.** *Cpl. Tommy Huynh*

dock landing ship Pearl Harbor, which departed their San Diego homeport Nov. 14 as part of the Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group.



**Marines disembark a landing craft at Ream Naval Base near Sihanoukville, Cambodia, Dec. 12.** *Cpl. Ryan Carpenter*

## Sailors, Marines volunteer time for yard, handiwork

### SINGAPORE

By Sgt. Elyssa Quesada

SINGAPORE – Forty service members volunteered at the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped building and at the Franciscan Sisters of Mary Missionary Center here Dec. 22.

Marines with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit and sailors aboard USS Makin Island cleared brush, fixed lights and cleaned storage areas, according to Sgt. Tyler Gaskill, the supply chief for Battalion Landing Team 3/1, the ground combat element for the unit.

“The events were 100-percent successful,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Hatondra Willis, a religious programs specialist with the Marine unit. “We had the right amount of people, and we were able to accomplish everything they asked us to do.”

American service members visiting Singapore have volunteered for the association since 2008, with more than 10 groups helping to maintain the area, according to association member Siow-Huee Tan.

“It’s a privilege and it’s part of being a Marine – being able to help out someone who needs it,” said Sgt. Phillip Blackwell, a vehicle commander with the team.

While deployed, community events give



Marines and sailors with the Makin Island Amphibious Ready group clear leaves from the Franciscan Sisters of Mary Missionary Center in Singapore Dec. 22. Cpl. Gene Allen Ainsworth III

service members an opportunity to see a different side of each country and interact with the culture, said Blackwell, 27, who is from Memphis.

“It feels good to be able to help out those who are in need,” said Gaskill, 25, who hails from East Liverpool, Ohio.

“I think the opportunity is very ben-

eficial for both of us to interact,” said Tan. “We are very grateful for you all to come and help out and make this a safer and cleaner place for the visually impaired.”

The Camp Pendleton, Calif., unit deployed from San Diego Nov. 14 and arrived in Southeastern Asia Dec. 21 as part of a regularly scheduled deployment.

## Unit conducts urban training

By Sgt. Elyssa Quesada

SINGAPORE – Unit Marines conducted urban-terrain training here Dec. 13-14 during a 10-day round-robin.

More than 90 Marines and sailors from the unit’s command, ground-combat and logistics elements attended classes, patrolled through a training town and interacted with Marines role playing as town leadership and local aggressors.

Mortarmen with the ground-combat element, Battalion Landing Team 3/1, taught patrolling, firing positions and weapons handling.

“They were able to understand the basics of patrolling and then use them,” said Sgt. Ramon Rodriguez, a section leader with the mortar platoon.

Clad in body-armor and carrying small-arms weapons, the Marines and sailors divided into squads and fire teams to patrol the training town, all while gathering information about the town and its hostile enemy forces.

Each patrol was different, with varying factors such as simulated improvised explosive devices, enemy fire and casualties.

“I think they did an outstanding job and accomplished



Ammunition technician Sgt. Courtney M. Brooks leads a training patrol at the Murai Urban Training Facility in Singapore Dec. 18. Lance Cpl. Claudia M. Palacios

the mission,” said Sgt. Curney Russell, scout section leader with the team. “During the patrol, we maintained good communication; we moved well, and we were able to clear each

room efficiently.”

“It’s amazing to have the opportunity to come out and train in a different environment,” said Russell, 27, who hails from Manchester, N.H.



A fire team executes a maneuver before exiting a building at the Murai Urban Training Facility in Singapore Dec. 16. Lance Cpl. Claudia M. Palacios

## Ground-combat, logistics elements clear buildings in close quarters

By Sgt. Elyssa Quesada

### SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE — Forty Marines and sailors with Combat Logistic Battalion 11 and Battalion Landing Team 3/1 conducted close-quarters battle training at the Murai Urban Training Facility here Dec. 17-18, part of a 10-day training series.

Members of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit’s logistics- and ground-combat elements attended marksmanship classes, conducted weapons drills and secured buildings.

Vehicle commander Sgt. Phillip Blackwell, who taught several classes, said, “Being proficient in these skills -- in case we do find ourselves in a combat zone -- is important.”

Clad in body-armor and carrying small-arms weapons, the Marines and sailors divided into two- and four-man teams, se-

cured rooms, and encountered simulated local aggressors.

“I learned how to clear rooms, how to recognize a weapon’s malfunction and how to solve it,” said Lance Cpl. Jeffery Hankins, a military policeman with the logistics-combat element. “Although I knew some of the information, it was good to get a refresher to help build muscle memory.”

Blackwell, who serves with the ground-combat element’s Weapons Company, said that in addition to building weapons proficiency and teaching tactics, the classes reminded the Marines that they are riflemen first.

The Camp Pendleton, Calif., unit deployed from San Diego Nov. 14 and arrived in Southeastern Asia Dec. 11 as part of a regularly scheduled deployment.



Mortarman Lance Cpl. Jordan Quinton practices a firing position at the Murai Urban Training Facility in Singapore Dec. 17 during basic combat marksmanship training. Sgt. Elyssa Quesada



Marines and sailors fire at a known-distance range in Singapore Dec. 17. *Lance Cpl. Claudia M. Palacios*

## Unit fires on known-distance course in downpour

*By Sgt. Elyssa Quesada*

SINGAPORE -- Unit members participated in a live-fire exercise under wet and humid conditions in the northern region here Dec. 19.

One hundred and two Marines and five corpsmen with Combat Logistic Battalion 11, Battalion Landing Team 3/1, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced) and the unit's command element fired on a known-distance course to solidify and improve their combat marksmanship skills, according to Gunnery Sgt. Lewis Layton, the range safety officer.

The Marines and sailors began at the 300-meter firing line and assaulted to 200- and 100-meter marks, engaging targets from a prone firing position.

"It's different from what we are used to," said Cpl. Ricardo Reyes, a mortarman with the team. "The course added surprises and

new factors for us to consider and got us all out of the comfort zone."

The second course of fire included movement from the 50-meter firing line to the 25-meter firing line while engaging pop-up targets from a standing firing position.

Marine instructors with the unit taught the basics on weapons handling, patrolling and close-quarters battle in the days leading up to the live-fire.

Although the environment was challenging for the Marines, it provided them an opportunity to appreciate what the Marines did in the Pacific in World War II, according to Capt. Brad Whited, the unit's Weapons Company commanding officer.

"The Marines were able to reflect on some of the basic skills that they need to stay abreast on," said Whited. "Hopefully the Marines that don't go out into the field a lot go out and experience something outside their military occupational specialty because every Marine is a rifleman."



Lance Cpl. Kevin L. Brown, left, and a Singapore Armed Forces service member interact at a range in Singapore Dec. 17. *Lance Cpl. Claudia M. Palacios*