

## PACIFIC ISLANDS REPORT

*Pacific Islands Development Program/East-West Center  
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### YAP LOSES SOLDIER TO IRAQ WAR

By Katie Worth

HAGATNA, Guam (Pacific Daily News, Feb. 10) – Staff Sgt. Steven Bayow, a 42-year-old soldier from Yap, was one of two soldiers killed Friday in Bayji, Iraq, when a bomb hit their vehicle.

He was the second man from the Federated States of Micronesia and at least the eighth man from the region to be killed in Iraq over the last 14 months.

Another soldier from the FSM, Kosraean corpsman Bailey Elley, also sustained injuries in Iraq last week while he was tending to an injured soldier, said Samson Pretrick, FSM consul general on Guam. Pretrick said Elley was helping the injured soldier when another bomb went off near the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and burned his face and lungs.

Bayow's older brother Mark Mathow, who lives in Colonia, Yap, said the family has been slammed hard with the news of their brother's death.

"It was a very unexpected call," Mathow said last night.

Though Bayow was stationed in Fort Stewart, Ga., with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, his older brother Mark Mathow said his heart never left Yap.

Bayow had been in the Army for at least 16 years, and had talked about returning to stay in Yap after he retired in the next few years, Mathow said.

"He was talking about it because he's very much an island boy. He has traveled abroad and experienced life outside of Yap, but he still appreciates his home life, the island life," he said.

"We have been looking forward to having him around the house when he comes back, so it was really an unexpected call and very hard on the family. He has a big family, but we are very close," he said.

Bayow's older sister, 58-year-old Elizabeth Mizelle, lives in Yigo. She is leaving today to be with her family in Yap.

She remembered how much her younger brother had been changed by joining the military.

"He's a very good guy, outgoing, active, everything. When he joined the military, they

really trained him and really changed him. He really became respectful and independent. He likes to help people, he likes to work. He's a good brother," she said. "I really miss him."

Mizelle said they were among 14 siblings. Mathow said all of his off-island siblings will return to Yap for the funeral. He said the family on Yap had learned of the death on Saturday, and had been visited by two members of the military and a member of the U.S. Embassy to the FSM yesterday.

Bayow is the second man from FSM to be killed in Iraq in the last several months. Army Sgt. Skipper Soram, 23, from Kolonia, Pohnpei, died after an explosion near his security post on Sept. 22.

Mathow said despite his family's unbearable loss, he supports the war in Iraq.

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