

The Flag

Patriotism runs high here, but that is a good thing. You want people to love their country and be proud. The people here have such respect for their nation that the raising and lowering of the flag is cause for a commotion...or lack thereof.

Around 7:30a, each military camp/base/headquarters/office will go outside and raise their flag. Around 6 PM, they will lower the flag. If you are in the vicinity of the flags, you must stop everything. If you are working, you stop. If you are crossing the street, you stop. If you are eating, you stop. If you are driving, you stop. It is quite eerie to look around and see everyone standing completely still, some even in mid-stride, almost like the beginning of a scary movie. But at the same time, the people have such a respect for their nation that they stand motionless and wait for the procession to be over.

Some locations have a fanfare with militia men and women marching and a bugle playing. We got stopped right in front of such a location one morning and Adah loved the bugle. Every time we drive by, Adah asks to hear it "one more time." One morning when I am braver, I might walk down there and watch the flag raise while they play the bugle. Until then, you will have to settle for some photos of people in mid-motion. Although the photos will never give you such a strong impression as would the sudden silence that occurs around you.



"Pause" from making concrete blocks



Bowing his head while he takes a work "pause."

The crowd "pauses." All of them stood in that exact pose for the entire event.