

Chronology of Events in Iraq, July 2004*

July 1

Deadly US air strike on Falluja. (British Broadcasting Corporation / BBC)

Four people were killed when a house in the Iraqi city of Falluja was hit by a US air strike, witnesses have said. Another 10 people were injured in the incident. "The house was completely destroyed. It is basically rubble," one local said. The US military said the house was a hide-out for members of the Tawhid and Jihad movement led by senior al-Qaeda member Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. A US military spokesman said as many as 15 were killed in the air strike and subsequent shoot-out.

Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV report on the same news on July 6: Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi said that the Iraqi security forces gave "precise and irrefutable intelligence information" to the US forces to bombard a house used by Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in southeast Al-Fallujah.

Roadside bombing wounds senior Iraqi official, kills two others. (Chinese Xinhua News Agency)

A senior official at Iraq's Finance Ministry was wounded in a roadside bombing that killed two of his companions and injured two others. The blast happened in the district of Qadessya in the west of Baghdad.

BBC update on July 2: An Iraqi official heading an inquiry into alleged corruption in the UN oil-for-food programme was killed by a bomb. The official, Ihsan Karim, died in hospital after a bomb placed under one of the cars in his convoy exploded. The board he headed had been given independence from the government as it investigated commissions paid to members of the former regime.

Clashes flare in Najaf, curfew imposed. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

Iraqi police imposed a curfew in Najaf after having clashes with followers of Muqtada al-Sadr. The Najaf chief of police told the press that residents should stay at home from 9.00 pm to 6:30 am. Eyewitnesses said stores were closed and that fighters from Sadr's Mahdi Army had spread to the streets after being chased by police. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Iyad Allawi said the interim government might impose martial law in some places of Iraq.

Lawyers 'denied access' to Saddam Hussain. (BBC)

Lawyers appointed by Saddam Hussain's family to represent the ousted Iraqi leader say they have been repeatedly denied access to their client. Mohammed Rashdan - one of a 20-strong team taken on by the family - has asked for international protection to

* *Disclaimer: Reports contained in this document are selected from publicly available resources and edited by country experts. The information provided here is not, and does not purport to be, either exhaustive with regard to conditions in the country of origin surveyed, or conclusive as to the merits of any particular claim. Further information may be obtained from BO Ankara.*

enable him to visit his client. He also alleged that he had received death threats from the Iraqi government.

July 2

Rocket hits central Baghdad hotel. (Agence France Presse / AFP)

Several rockets were fired at a Baghdad hotel complex used by foreigners, sending up plumes of smoke and scoring a direct hit on the Sheraton Hotel. A security guard at the scene said three Iraqi civilians were wounded when one of the projectiles crashed into the parking lot of the nearby Baghdad Hotel. A witness said the weapons were fired from a minivan parked alongside Firdoos square outside the heavy concrete barriers that seal off the Sheraton and the Palestine.

Group says Turkish hostages released in Iraq after company pledge to pull out. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An armed group in Iraq has set free two Turkish hostages in the wake of reports that the company for which the two work has accepted the condition of withdrawing its personnel from Iraqi territory. The group, which calls itself Saraya al-Mujahidin [The Mujahidin Brigades] had earlier released three hostages, out of five it had kidnapped and threatened to kill if the company for which they worked did not withdraw its personnel from Iraq.

Baghdad party HQ hit in suspected attempt on life of Industry Minister. (AFP)

Mortar fire hit the headquarters of the Iraqi Islamic Party in the Yarmuk neighbourhood, wounding a security guard, in what Industry and Mineral Resources Minister Hajem al-Hassani said was likely an attempt to assassinate him. The Iraqi Islamic Party is a Sunni religious faction that was active in negotiations to end a month-long siege of the Sunni insurgent bastion of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, by US marines in April 2004.

Turkish cease-fire monitoring force returns from northern Iraq (Turkish commercial NTV television)

The Turkish officers and noncommissioned officers who had been in northern Iraq to monitor the cease-fire between the Talabani and Barzani groups since 1997 have returned to Turkey. The force in question was established at the initiative of Turkey, the United States and Britain in 1997, following the escalation of clashes between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Once the cease-fire was instituted, the force continued its activities under the name of the Cease-Fire Monitoring Force. Military circles remark that there is no question of the withdrawal of the Turkish soldiers who are on the Iraqi side of the border to ensure border security and prevent terrorist infiltrations or the special forces personnel who are in certain northern Iraqi cities to act as liaison officers.

July 5

Iranians arrested in northern Iraq (AFP)

Three Iranians, purportedly representing their country in the northern Iraq's Kurdistan region, have been arrested by Iraqi security forces, a Kurdish official said that the head of the Iranian bureau in Kalar and two of his assistants were arrested by Iraqi security forces who took them to an unknown destination. He said the operation was

carried out without the knowledge of intelligence forces of the Patriotic Union for Kurdistan (PUK). The caretaker government of Iyad Allawi has accused both Iran and Syria of supporting the insurgency.

Tribes protest discrimination. (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Al-Ittihad*)

Al-Rafidain website and other agencies published a strongly-worded announcement signed by 13 of Sada tribes and 41 other Shia tribes. The announcement condemned mutilation of the dead bodies of six young Shia men, a Lebanese, and Iraqis in separate incidents. The announcement also questioned the release of other people and considered this an act of waging sectarian riot. The announcement threatened to surround Ramadi and Fallujah and to kill their citizens anywhere in Iraq under the justification that this was what rioters wanted. The announcement also called for taking quick procedures regarding the targeting of Shia tribes people and the arrest of criminals for trial.

People march in support of Saddam. (London-based newspaper *Al-Zaman*)

Many people demonstrated in Mosul University Street carrying pictures of deposed president Saddam Hussain and chanting for his life. They denounced the way the media showed him in a courtroom dock. Huge numbers of Iraqi security forces surrounded the street and blocked the exits leading to it in order to control the situation. The demonstrators were heading toward the city centre where another demonstration - which started from Dawwasa Street carrying Saddam's pictures was also heading.

July 6

Gunmen vow to kill Zarqawi unless he quits Iraq. (Reuters)

Iraqi gunmen calling themselves the Salvation Movement have vowed to hunt down or kill suspected al Qaeda operative Abu Musab al-Zarqawi unless he leaves the country. Jordanian-born Zarqawi is leader of the Jama'at al-Tawhid and Jihad, which has claimed several deadly suicide bombings, assassinations of Iraqi officials and the kidnapping and beheadings of a South Korean and an American hostage.

Municipal council member killed in Baghdad. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

In Baghdad, Al-A'zamiyah municipal council member Sabah Naji was killed by unidentified gunmen.

Ansar al-Islam group in Iraqi Kurdistan said to be reorganizing itself. (London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat*)

An Ansar al-Islam group [Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan, SIK] member arrested by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's [PUK] security apparatus previously revealed that a cousin of Mullah Krekar, called Sayyid, is reorganizing this group's Kurdish cells and now said to be living in Mosul.

Car bomb in Khalis kills 13. (AP)

A car bomb blew up in the town of Khalis, killing 13 people attending a wake for the victims of a previous attack. The attack came two days after gunmen fired at a building belonging to a city council official, killing two people and wounding two. The new attack targeted the wake for those killed in that attack.

Iraqi “resistance” chooses leaders and governing board. (London-based newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*)

A group of insurgents called "Iraqi Resistance Squadrons" have declared that 16 resistance platoons of resistance met and chose a unified leadership in addition to a supreme political board. The group also announced that the 16 platoons agreed on three major goals: not to target civil sites, to focus on occupation forces and those who cooperate with them, and to call continuously for the dismissal of occupation forces and for the establishment of an elected government. The announcement did not mention the platoons' names nor did it indicate a certain body that organised coordination among them.

Ba’athists may be nominated for national congress. (Independent Democrats Movement newspaper *Al-Nahdhah*)

Head of the Supreme Committee to Prepare for the National Congress Fuoad Masoum has spoken for allowing Ba’athists to be nominated for the congress which will be held by the end of July 2004. Committee spokesman Abdul Haleem al-Rihaimi said the door will be open for Ba’athists who joined the party to earn their living as long as they do not have blood on their hands. Rihaimi added that the parliament's authorities would be more than consultative but less than legislative. He also indicated that the parliament could not form the government because it was formed after the government for compulsory reasons.

Pro-Saddam demonstration in Samarra, Interior Minister’s house attacked. (Institute for War & Peace Reporting / IWPR)

A protest against the trial of former president Saddam Hussein had earlier plunged Samarra into anarchy as insurgents and looters attacked official buildings. Residents say hundreds of demonstrators poured into central Samarra following the appearance of the former president before an Iraqi court. Iraqi police said a United States troop withdrawal from this predominantly Sunni town, on the river Tigris north of Baghdad, left them unable to maintain order. Some of the demonstrators were armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, heavy machine-guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Residents said the demonstration quickly turned violent, and that insurgents attacked the homes of Interior Minister Fallah al-Naqib and Wafiq al-Samarrai, a defector from Baathist intelligence. Four guards were reportedly killed. Witnesses said police joined in the protests. Captain Mohammed al-Samarrai of the town's police station, acknowledged that some “rogue policemen” had taken part in looting, but insisted the bulk of the police force was simply unable to cope with the scale of unrest. "Police lost control over the city after the American withdrawal. We don't have heavy weapons.... The Americans used to back us with their weapons," he said. The police captain said hundreds of men had left the force after receiving letters accusing them of collaboration with the insurgents. "Three-quarters of the policemen have left their jobs. We have only the remaining quarter," he said.

Masked men take over Samarra. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mada*)

Armed groups in Samarra have taken control of the headquarters previously occupied by the coalition forces. Masked men were patrolling the streets and imposing their regulations as if the city is run by them. They prevented women from showing themselves unveiled, and they prohibited people from wearing jeans. They imposed a

curfew as well. Iraqi police did nothing to stop them. Those groups have assaulted the house of the head of the district advisory council Adnan Thabit, and set it on fire.

Iraqis arrested over murder of US citizen ex-Ba'athists. (Iraqi Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq newspaper *Al-Adalah*)

The deputy Interior Minister has revealed that the Iraqi police, in coordination with the multinational forces, have managed to arrest a group of four former Ba'athists who admitted responsibility for a number of kidnapping operations, including the kidnapping of US citizen Nicholas Berg, who was killed recently. The deputy Interior Minister explained that a security unit had observed the movements and activities of this group in a district situated to the west of Baghdad. He added that, after collecting the necessary information, the cell's base was attacked and its elements were arrested and, during the interrogation, admitted the crimes of murder and kidnapping they had committed around Baghdad.

July 7

Six Iraqis said wounded in central Baghdad mortar attacks. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi security source said that six Iraqis, including two policemen, were wounded when mortar shells landed in the Green Zone [fortified area which houses Iraqi government buildings and the US and British embassies] and Al-Zaytun Street in central Baghdad. Al-Zaytun Street is home to the headquarters of the National Accord Movement which is headed by interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi.

Gunmen kill son of Iraqi local council head in al-Ramadi. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi police source in Al-Ramadi said that Sulayman, son of Shaykh Amir al-Ali, head of Al-Anbar Province's Local Council, and two of his bodyguards were shot dead by unidentified gunmen.

Iraqi Safety Law law authorizes premier to declare state of emergency. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

The new Iraqi Safety Law has been announced. Article 1 of the law stipulates that "the prime minister, following a unanimous agreement by the Presidency, has the right to declare the state of emergency in any area in Iraq where Iraqi people face a grave danger which threatens the lives of individuals and which results from a continuing state of violence by any number of persons seeking to prevent the formation of a broadly representative government in Iraq or hinder the peaceful political participation by all Iraqis, or for any other purpose". The Justice Minister said that, in a state of emergency, the authorities had to obtain "a judicial warrant for arrest or search, except in extremely urgent circumstances". The prime minister is authorized to appoint either civilian or military governors in any region of Iraq, he added.

Four Iraqi policemen killed in Baghdad clashes. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi security official said that four Iraqi policemen have been killed and around 17 others wounded in fierce clashes between unidentified gunmen on the one hand, and the US and Iraqi troops, on the other, in Haifa Street in central Baghdad.

July 8

High-ranking Ba'ath party official killed in Baghdad car explosion. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

It was reported that Ali Abbas Hasan, a leader in the disbanded Ba'ath Party, was killed in the Uwayrij area, south of Baghdad, when an explosive charge went off in the car he was riding at the entrance of his factory. The incident caused material damage to the facade of the factory.

Three workers killed, mutilated (Islamic Dawa Party weekly *Al-Bayan*)

Three [Shia persons] from al-Imam district of Mahaweel area of Babylon province were killed and mutilated. They worked in a restaurant attached to an American base in Fallujah. They were threatened to stop working with the Americans, and they obeyed. After leaving the base, they were arrested by an Iraqi security patrol. However, policemen from al-Tawheed police station found their mutilated bodies in al-Sham area, and their corpses were delivered to the morgue of Fallujah general hospital.

Two Turkish TV journalists were arrested in Falluja. (Anatolian News Agency)

Two Turkish TV journalists were arrested in Falluja. Local security authorities also confiscated their records.

Iraqi was mutilated in Mosul for working with US forces. (Anatolian News Agency)

An Iraqi operating a laundry and a restaurant in Mosul, Yonus Mohammed Ali, was abducted by gunmen on June 29. After his family paid the gunmen a ransom of \$20,000, he was found his hands mutilated and one of his eyes blinded.

July 9

Group threatens to kill any Iraqi lawyer defending Saddam. (Egyptian news agency MENA)

An armed Iraqi group, "Seifullah" [the Double-Edged Sword of God, a Shia symbol], threatened to kill any Iraqi attorney defending former Iraqi president Saddam Hussain. Saddam's defence team had chosen on July 5 an Iraqi lawyer to represent them in the trial but his name was not disclosed.

Zarqawi threatened with death by second group. (AFP)

A previously unheard of militant group threatened to kill Jordanian Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi. Calling itself "Seifullah" (the Double-Edged Sword of God), the group threatened to kill Zarqawi and accused him of "treachery and allegiance to the (deposed) regime of Saddam Hussein". Zarqawi heads his own militant faction named Tawhid wal Jihad (Unification and Holy War).

Mortars pound central Baghdad, killing child, wounding three. (AFP)

Mortars hammered a house behind the Sadeer Hotel hotel in Baghdad, killing a six-year-old Iraqi boy and wounding at least three other people, police said.

Two Bulgarian drivers taken hostages in Iraq (Bulgarian News Agency / BTA)

Bulgarian truck drivers , Ivailo Kepov and Georgi Lazov have been taken hostages in Iraq.

Three Iraqis condemned to death before capital punishment ban lifted. (AFP)

An Iraqi judge said he has condemned to death three men in the Shiite holy city of Karbala, even before a ban on capital punishment has been officially lifted. Judge Saleh Shaibani said the sentences were the first to be handed down by an Iraqi court since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime 15 months ago, after which the US-led occupation administration suspended the death penalty.

July 10

Party official abducted in Baghdad. (Saudi newspaper *Al-Watan*)

Abd-al-Muhsin Shalash, Secretary-General of the Free Iraqi Society Party [FISP], was abducted. Shalash announced his candidacy for the post of president of the republic and widely handed out flyers carrying his photo and biography in Baghdad and in other Iraqi cities. Fadil al-Khaffaji, member of the FISP's Political Bureau, said that 10 gunmen abducted Shalash at night and whisked him away to an unknown destination after destroying computers in the party's headquarters in the centre of Baghdad.

Liquor stores attacked in Baquba. (AFP)

In Baquba, four liquor stores were blown up almost simultaneously around dawn, with one of the attacks killing a passerby.

July 11

Three injured in anti-police attacks around Kirkuk. (AFP)

Three people including a local police chief were injured in two separate attacks around Kirkuk. Saad Abdullah al-Jiburi, the chief of police in Abbassi, an area west of Kirkuk, was reportedly caught in a hail of bullets as he drove home from his police station. Earlier in the day, four armed men sprayed bullets at police patrolling in a vehicle in Kirkuk, seriously injuring one policeman and an Iraqi woman caught in the crossfire, the police said.

Turkish troops in northern Iraq await order to attack Kurdish group. (Turkish newspaper *Star*)

More than 15,000 Turkish troops in northern Iraq are reportedly controlling all the important points in the region. The Turkish military has made improvements to the Bamerni Airport to make it possible for more troops and munitions to be deployed to the region with dispatch if necessary. The electronic systems used to guide landings and takeoffs at this airport were brought from Turkey. Turkey has reportedly started setting up security and intelligence-assessment centres at crossing points in the north and south of northern Iraq. The Turkish Special Forces in the region are carrying out intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance missions and using cutting-edge weapons. It has been reported that all Turkish tanks in the region are equipped with night vision, which makes it possible for all walking life forms to be closely watched. Deputy Chief of the General Staff General Ilker Basbug emphasized that there is no relation between the termination of the mission of the Cease-Fire Monitoring Force and the withdrawal of Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) elements in northern Iraq, adding, "Our presence in northern Iraq is linked to the presence of the PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party, renamed Kongra-Gel]. While the PKK has not been

purged from northern Iraq entirely, the withdrawal of our military presence from the region is definitely out of the question."

Islamic militants fire on liquor shop, kidnap one. (AP)

Islamist militants in Baghdad opened fire on a downtown shop selling alcohol, destroying the merchandise and kidnapping an employee. "They came in two cars and shouted "God is Great," as they opened fire," said a witness. Several cars were also destroyed in the attack.

July 12

Local leader of Shi'a party killed in Musayyib. (Anatolian News Agency)

Unidentified persons assassinated the regional leader of SCIRI in Musayyib, Abdulin Hasan. He was killed by gunfire from a car.

Allawi suspends Zebari's appointment of 47 ambassadors. (Jordanian newspaper *Al-Arab al-Yawm*)

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiar Zebari's announcement of the appointment of 47 Iraqi ambassadors in Arab and foreign countries has led to a disagreement between the Iraqi Prime Ministry and the Foreign Ministry. It was reported that Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi decided to transfer the file of the appointment of the new 47 ambassadors from the Foreign Ministry to the Prime Ministry. An Iraqi Foreign Ministry source said that the real reason for Allawi's objection is that Kurdish figures have been appointed to embassies in key Arab and foreign countries and this was viewed as Kurdish monopolization of large positions in the diplomatic field.

July 13

Iraqi police round up hundreds in bid to clean up Baghdad of street crime. (AFP)

Iraqi police arrested 500 alleged murderers, kidnappers and thieves in the downtown district of Bab el-Sheikh in a single day as part of a plan to clean up Baghdad's streets. Convicts, reportedly freed by former president Saddam Hussein's regime, roamed free amid the violent insurgency over the past 15 months. "Several criminals, including women, were arrested and one of them was killed while trying to resist police," the police said. In the past week, Baghdad police have rescued four Iraqis, including an 11-year-old child, who had been kidnapped and held for money.

Iraq starts issuing new passports. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

Iraqi passport issuing departments have begun issuing a new passport which carries the emblem of the interim Iraqi government. This passport replaces travel documents issued by the CPA [Coalition Provisional Authority] and carries the emblem "The Republic of Iraq". Iraqi officials say that this passport will be officially recognized all over the world. The officials also say that the passport will be issued to all Iraqi citizens without exception, apart from those with travel ban restrictions. These restrictions are reportedly sent to the passport offices via a computer network.

Two Shiite militiamen arrested by Iraqi police in Najaf. (AFP)

Two Shiite Muslim militiamen loyal to Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr were arrested by Iraqi police in Najaf following a brief clash, according to a Sadr spokesman. The incident occurred in the city's 1920 Revolution Square after Mehdi Army militiamen

"got wind of a plan by police to enter the inner sanctum of the holy city by force," said the spokesman. Although most of Sadr's forces have allowed police to deploy around the city on June 4, they have refused to relinquish their stronghold around the Imam Ali shrine, one of the holiest sites for Shiites.

Radical Islamist suspects arrested in Kirkuk. (AFP)

Up to 17 alleged members of the radical Islamist group Ansar al-Islam were arrested by the US military and by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) separately in Kirkuk. Local PUK representative Jalal Jawhar said: "They are on the PUK's most wanted list. They had maps and document for carrying out terrorist attacks and operations, against Kurdish parties and government establishments in order to foment sectarian strife".

Bulgarian hostage in Iraq beheaded. (AFP)

A Bulgarian truck driver taken hostage in Iraq has been beheaded by the Tahid wal Jihad group (Unity and Holy War) of suspected Al-Qaeda operative Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi. The group threatened to kill another Bulgarian hostage it is holding unless its demand was met for the release within 24 hours of Iraqi prisoners detained by the US military in Iraq.

Falluja Brigade agrees 'to join Iraqi armed forces'. (UK newspaper *Financial Times*)

Community leaders in the insurgent stronghold of Falluja say they have negotiated a deal to merge their militia, the Falluja Brigade, into Iraq's armed forces, following efforts by the Iraqi interim government to extend its control to the city. The deal was agreed in return for a financial package, in talks between the prime minister and Fallujan leaders in Baghdad during the previous week, said a member of the eight-man delegation representing the city in the negotiations. Ahmed Hardan, leader of a local Islamist political party, said the government had agreed to pay army salaries and honour a US commitment to pay 50m dollars in compensation to scores of Falluja's families made homeless by a US bombardment in April 2004. Mr Hardan said that the prayer leader of the radical Jihadi trend in the city, Abdullah Jarabi, had not been consulted.

Iranian refugees moving to northern Iraq. (UN OCHA Integrated Regional Information Networks / IRIN)

Swedish NGO Qandil is working in collaboration with the office of the UNHCR to build accommodation for 250 Iranian Kurdish refugee families who recently went to the Suleimaniya governorate, saying they had left deteriorating conditions in Al-Tash camp in the province of Al-Anbar. Families have been moving north for months, but the trickle turned into a flood in April and May 2004 as violence in the Sunni triangle peaked with pitched battles between US forces and the "Iraqi resistance" in the city of Fallujah, near Al-Tash. Aid agencies say they have been able to provide residents of Al-Tash with medicine and the government is providing food. UNHCR has been providing aid in Al-Tash, through the Italian NGO Intersos, including non-food items, water and sanitation and income generation projects. The refugee agency is not however, encouraging people to move from the camp due to security reasons as the road between the camp and the north is deemed unsafe, it says. In addition to this, UNHCR has raised concerns regarding facilities for people returning to the north,

including lack of shelter. Refugees at Pungala, a barren promontory housing 17 families overlooking the river Sirwan, said their relations with locals in Al-Tash and the nearby town of Ramadi had been tense since they were obliged to settle there by the Baathist regime in 1982. But tensions grew tremendously with the start of the Coalition war. Some refugees claim they stopped going outside Al-Tash altogether after a mullah in Fallujah responded to rumours that elite Iraqi Kurdish militias were fighting alongside US troops outside the city with a fatwa (religious order) permitting the murder of any Kurd.

Scattered in tent villages and rented accommodation in and around Khaniqin, Kalar, Darbendikhan and Arbat, the Iranian Kurdish refugees receive aid both from Qandil and from the local departments of Sulaymaniyah governorate's Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs. Despite that, though, the situation at Pungala and in other tent villages is fairly dire.

Senior Iraqi official jailed for corruption. (UK newspaper *The Guardian*)

A senior Iraqi official linked to the prominent former exile Ahmad Chalabi has been convicted of abuse of power in the first big crackdown on corruption since the war. Sabah Noori Ibrahim Salim, a member of Mr Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress and the office manager for Iraq's Finance Minister in the first postwar cabinet, was jailed for four and a half years on charges of making false arrests, according to court documents. Mr Chalabi described the investigation as a political vendetta after his Baghdad villa was raided by police and US troops in May 2004. Salim still faces several other charges at the central criminal court of Iraq, including bribery, theft and fraud. The convictions, handed down by Judge Naeem Hassan al-Ekaily on July 4, relate to an investigation into the disappearance of 36bn dinars in 2004 in the switch to a new Iraqi currency. According to the judge's verdict, on January 29, 2004 Salim went to several state-run banks and arrested nine women cashiers, accusing them of forging currency and stealing the missing money. The court documents say the women were then held for three days at a police unit in Baghdad without seeing a judge or a court. Several of the women stated they were held for at least 40 days each and had to give up the title deeds to their family houses to obtain bail. Mr Chalabi headed the finance committee of the now disbanded governing council and was instrumental in appointing senior figures at the finance ministry. The women from the Shaab bank branch still face charges of stealing the missing millions, but they have been given no date for the case to open. The five women have been demoted to clerical jobs and banned from travelling outside Iraq.

INC alleges arresting "masked gunmen" leader in Al-Fallujah. (Iraqi National Congress weekly newspaper *Al-Mu'tamar*)

Iraqi National Congress Party in Al-Fallujah allegedly arrested General Hamid Zbar [also identified as Hamid al-Bar], a member of the Military Bureau of the dissolved Ba'ath Party, who was leading a group of masked gunmen.

July 14

At least 10 people killed in Baghdad blast. (AFP)

At least 10 people were killed and 40 wounded in a car bomb blast at the entrance to a high-security Baghdad compound housing the US embassy and the Iraqi government. Three national guard officers have been killed and seven civilians.

Iraqi minister says explosion response to arrest of armed group's leader. (United Arab Emirates Abu Dhabi TV)

Iraqi Defence Minister Hazim Sha'lan said that the explosion, which targeted a check point in Baghdad, came in response to the raids carried out by Iraqi forces against the dens of the perpetrators and the arrest of their leader, Adnan Hamad al-Samarrai, who was an intelligence officer in the former regime. He added that 50 of his supporters had been arrested. Al-Samarrai was reportedly the leader of Haifa operations. He was wounded and hiding in a house in Zaynubah area in Baghdad.

Iraqi Industry Ministry official assassinated in Baghdad. (AP)

Gunmen reportedly killed an auditor for the Iraqi Industry Ministry in a drive-by shooting as he was leaving his office in Baghdad. The attack on Sabir Karim is the second auditor in Iraq's fledgling interim government to be targeted for assassination.

Governor of Mosul killed. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party satellite TV)

The Governor of Mosul (Ninawah), Usamah al-Kashmulah, and two of his guards have been killed in an attack.

KDP official survives attack. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party satellite TV)

A member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party Political Bureau, Muhammad Mala Qadir, survived an attack on his life, in which a Kurdistan peshmerga was killed and three others injured.

Iraqi source says chaos reigns in Al-Fallujah as "armed groups" take control (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Shira*)

According to an Iraqi security source, Fallujah city is now ruled by armed groups. The Al-Fallujah Municipal Council has been replaced with the armed groups leaders and Islamist extremists, who control the important decisions. In addition, former Ba'ath Party members use the city as an assembly point. Al-Fallujah Brigade, assigned the task of maintaining law and order in the city, numbers approximately 2,000 personnel, including 271 officers with the rank of colonel and about 20 officers with the rank of staff major general and hundreds of other officers with various ranks. They reportedly disobey orders and some of them threaten to join the armed groups.

110 Shi'a allegedly killed in Falluja in June. (Iraqi Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq newspaper *Al-Adalah*)

It was reported that one hundred and ten Iraqi people were killed; the bodies of 60 victims were buried in a mass grave while those of the rest are still lying in Al-Fallujah Public Hospital. An Iraqi citizen who managed to escape the killing scene told the families of the victims about the presence of the bodies of their relatives in the city of Al-Fallujah. All victims were Shi'is and were not involved in politics, as most of them were workers and truck drivers. The pictures and photos of the bodies of the victims as well as the relatives of the victims indicate that these victims were savagely tortured and mutilated as their eyes were taken out, their bones broken, their bodies cut with a sharp tool, and their skin burnt with chemicals and whipped by lashes.

Foreign lawyers approved for Saddam. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

The Iraqi Lawyers Association has agreed to have 16 Arab lawyers to defend Saddam in accord with the amended Iraqi lawyer law of 1965. As for the six foreign lawyers,

they have to get the approval of the minister of justice through an Iraqi lawyer, said Kamal Hamdoon, Secretary General of the Iraqi Lawyers Association. The foreign lawyers have been collecting evidence to defend Saddam.

Monarchists, republicans commemorate the past. (London-based newspaper *Al-Zaman*)

Supporters of the constitutional monarchy commemorated the anniversary of the assassination of King Faisal II July 14, 1958. Meanwhile, the ministerial council decided the occasion of the revolution led by Abdul Kareem Kasim to be an official holiday that changed Iraq from a monarchy to a republic.

July 15

10 killed in car bomb attack in Haditha. (AFP)

Ten people were killed, including three policemen, in a car bomb attack on a police station in the town of Haditha, police and hospital sources said. 27 people, seven of them from the police force, were also injured. The station is close to several local government buildings and a fire station.

A family killed in Kirkuk. (AFP)

Overnight in Kirkuk, five Iraqis from one family were killed when two mortars fell on their home in a predominantly Kurdish neighbourhood of the city near a police station.

Five Iraqis killed in Ramadi clashes. (AFP)

Five Iraqis also died and 21 were wounded in clashes between insurgents and US marines in the flashpoint western Iraqi city of Ramadi, hospital and police sources said.

Former Iraqi officials testify against Saddam Hussain. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Kurdistani Nuwe*)

The head of the special Iraqi tribunal in charge of trying Saddam Hussain and his aides said that the accused Tariq Aziz and Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, former deputy prime minister under Saddam Hussain's rule, testified against Saddam Hussain. He added that similar testimonies by other ex-officials in the former regime were also given. He also revealed that each of the 11 men who recently appeared before the court had admitted the crimes of each others.

Iraqi official killed. (AFP)

The head of security at Iraq's Foreign Ministry, Idris Karim Ramadan, was killed in an attack on his convoy traveling from Baghdad to Kirkuk. Two other officials were wounded when gunmen attacked their convoy traveling north on the road from Baghdad to Kirkuk.

July 16

Philippines pulling out of Iraq. (AFP)

Filipino citizen De la Cruz was abducted last week by a group calling itself the Islamic Army in Iraq - Khalid bin al-Walid Brigade. "The hostage will be freed after the withdrawal of the last Philippine soldier from Iraq, provided it takes place before the end of the month," said the statement. The Philippines has already begun to pull

its tiny military contingent from the country in a dramatic change in policy, made despite protests from Baghdad and Washington.

July 17

Iraqi justice minister survives car-bombing, six killed. (Al-Jazeera TV)

A car-bomb exploded on Al-Rabi Street in Al-Jami'ah area, to the west of Baghdad, targeting the motorcade of Justice Minister Malik Duhan al-Hasan. It was reported that the minister was not hurt in the incident, which resulted in killing six people and wounding others. Several civilian cars were damaged in the explosion. The Iraqi police and the US forces cordoned off the area.

Two killed, 25 injured in car bomb blast south of Baghdad. (Xinhua News Agency)

Two people were killed and 25 others injured in a car bomb explosion outside an Iraqi National Guard barracks south of Baghdad.

Sunni cleric gunned down in Baghdad. (AFP)

A Sunni Muslim cleric belonging to the Iraqi Islamic Party was gunned down by unidentified assailants in Baghdad. The party's spokesperson had no further details about the attack, but said Sheikh Abdul Samad Ismail al-Adhami may have been targeted because he is the brother of Abdul Wahab al-Adhami, a prominent Sunni cleric and party member known for his opposition to the ousted regime of Saddam Hussain. He said that some members of Saddam's banned Ba'ath party also "may not be too pleased with the party's message for national reconciliation." The party's headquarters were hit with a rocket-propelled grenade on July 2 that killed a guard, minutes after Hajem al-Hassani, the party's deputy chief, left the building. Hassani is Industry Minister in the caretaker government of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. The party's chief Muhsin Abdul Hamid was a member of the US-appointed Governing Council.

July 18

Two policemen killed in bomb blasts in Tikrit. (Xinhua News Agency)

One car bomb exploded near the Abu-Ajil police station in Tikrit, killing two police officer and wounding two others, according to an Iraqi police officer. Another car bomb exploded near a police academy in the city, wounding three officers and damaging 10 cars, the officer added.

Fourteen killed in Falluja strike. (BBC)

Fourteen people have died in a US air strike on a house in Falluja, doctors say. Hospital sources said women and children were among the dead. Deputy US Secretary of State Richard Armitage, on a visit to Baghdad, said the strike had been authorised by Iraq's interim government.

Two Kurds, two Arabs abducted in Kirkuk. (AFP)

Two Arabs and two Kurds have been abducted in recent days in Kirkuk in apparent tit-for-tat actions by the two ethnic groups, a national guard officer said. The first of the Arabs to be kidnapped was the son of the deputy head of the national guard in the city, Colonel Jassem Khalil. Soon afterward, the son of a Kurdish business leader in

Kirkuk, Abdel Karim Barzanjee, disappeared. Another Kurd, Mizhad Saadallah, who is responsible for protecting the Himrin oil field south of Kirkuk, was also abducted, followed by the kidnapping of a second Arab, Hassan Morei Obeidi, a former intelligence officer in the regime of deposed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. The Arab Rally of Kirkuk implicitly accused Kurdish security services of abducting the two Arabs. In turn, a Kurdish official said the Kurds were kidnapped by Saddam loyalists.

Allawi reopens Shia cleric's newspaper. (UK newspaper *Financial Times*)

Ayad Allawi, Iraq's interim Prime Minister, sought to reach out to Moqtada al-Sadr, a radical Shia cleric who has excluded himself from the political process, by allowing a controversial newspaper to resume publication. Allawi's office said that the *Hawza* newspaper, which reflects Sadr's thinking, is to be allowed to reopen in the interests of press freedom. Paul Bremer, the former US administrator, ordered the newspaper's closure in April 2004 after it allegedly called for him to be killed.

July 19

Nine dead in suicide attack against Iraqi police in Baghdad. (AFP)

At least nine people were killed when a suicide car bomb tore through a police car park in Baghdad. The force of the suicide blast behind a police station in Baghdad's southern Al-Dora district punched a huge crater into the earth. A policeman described the vehicle as a small tanker but he did not know whether it had been carrying fuel.

Kurds arrest three armed Iranians in north Iraq. (Jordanian newspaper *Al-Arab al-Yawm*)

It was reported that three Iranians were arrested when the Kurdish security forces stormed the Iranian Trade Centre in Suleimaniya, a hiding-place for the "weapons, explosives and foreign currency" which belonged to the suspects. Secretary-General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Jalal Talabani had earlier accused Iran of involvement in the explosions taking place in Iraq. He said at a party command meeting in Al-Sulaymaniyah that Iran offers money and weapons to entice people to carry out "car bomb attacks, killing and kidnapping operations".

Kidnapped police officer found dead near Ramadi. (AFP)

The body of a police officer kidnapped at the weekend was found west of the rebel Iraqi stronghold of Ramadi, a police official said. "We recovered the corpse of lieutenant-colonel Nafa Atallah Azidj, who was taken hostage on July 18," said the police.

Militants kill top Iraq Defence Ministry official. (AP)

Militants killed a top official in Iraq's Defense Ministry in a drive-by shooting as he walked into his house in Baghdad, the Defense Ministry said. Four gunmen drove up as Essam al-Dijaili, the head of the military's supply department, was bringing dinner home in the evening and opened fire, killing him and his bodyguard, said Mishal al-Sarraf, an adviser to the defense minister.

July 20

Basra Governor killed. (US newspaper *The New York Times*)

The interim governor of the city of Basra was fatally shot by unknown assailants as he was heading to work. The assassinations of the governor, Hazem al-Ainachi stood out as part of a recent revival of attacks aimed at Iraqi government institutions accused of collaborating with the 140,000-troop American presence in Iraq. It was reported that all members of the local government council had been threatened by unknown insurgents two weeks ago.

Sadr militia arrested 20 in raids in Al-Amara. (Anatolian News Agency)

Spokesperson for Shi'a leader al-Sadr stated that their militia raided several houses and stores in al-Amara, arresting 20 persons [connected with charges of breaching morality] under Shari'a law.

Four Iraqis killed, four wounded in Ba'qubah. (Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV)

Four Iraqis were killed and four others were wounded after an explosive device went off in the city of Ba'qubah. Al-Khalis Hospital director said four Iraqi civilians were killed and four others were wounded when an explosive device, planted at the side of the road, in the area of Al-Ghalibiyah, west of Ba'qubah, went off.

Ethnic group holds demonstration in Baghdad. (Iraqi news paper *Al-Shira*)

Approximately 200 persons of the Al-Shibak [a small ethnic group that lives north of Mosul] staged a demonstration in Baghdad, demanding representation for their ethnic group in the expanded National Conference scheduled to be held in the next few weeks.

Ba'athist becomes witness for the prosecution against Saddam. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Sabah*)

It was reported that former Ba'athist Mohammed Hamza al-Zubaidi revealed his willingness to be a prosecution witness against Saddam who reportedly ordered him in 1998 to assassinate Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Sadr, father of Muqtada al-Sadr. Zubaidi also said he would disclose the truths related to the Shia upheaval on 1991. The Shia accused Zubaidi of being behind the killing of many Shia clerics and citizens in Najaf, Hilla and Karbala as he was the Ba'ath party representative in those provinces.

July 21

Baghdad Council Member survives assassination attempt. (AP)

A member of Baghdad's provincial council, Sabeeh al-Ka'abi, was injured in an assassination attempt, and was in a stable condition, a hospital official said.

Four dead in violence in Ramadi. (AFP)

At least four people were killed and 14 wounded in clashes and a suspected car bomb blast in the centre of the rebel Iraqi city of Ramadi, police and hospital officials said. A US military spokesman confirmed that American soldiers were battling insurgents in Ramadi, but denied there had been a car bombing.

Three dead in Baghdad bomb blast. (AFP)

At least three people were killed when a car bomb ripped through a residential neighbourhood in Baghdad.

Six More Taken Hostage in Iraq (US newspaper *Washington Post*)

An Islamic militant group announced that it had captured six civilians from India, Kenya and Egypt and threatened to behead them unless their countries withdraw all workers from Iraq.

July 22

Iraqi policeman killed in Kirkuk. (AP)

A policeman was killed in Kirkuk in a drive-by shooting, police officials said. Gunmen in a car reportedly drove past a police station about 11 a.m. and shot dead a policeman standing outside. A bystander sustained minor gunshot wounds.

Two liquor sellers killed in Nasiriya. (Anatolian News Agency)

In attacks against liquor sellers in Nasiriya, two persons were killed and three wounded. It was reported that the victims were all Muslims.

Iraqi Turkoman official wounded by gunshots in Kirkuk. (Turkish TRT 2 television)

It was reported that Muhammad Rashid, leader of the Kirkuk Turkomani Party, was shot and wounded in his home. Leyit Muhammad Beyatli, an announcer of the Turkomani Television which broadcasts in Kirkuk and Mosul, was also reportedly fatally shot by unidentified gunmen a few days ago.

July 23

Eight wounded, including child, in Baghdad roadside explosion. (AFP)

Eight Iraqis were wounded, including a little girl who lost a leg, when a bus they were travelling in hit a roadside bomb in the northern part of the capital, police and hospital sources said.

US launches air strike on Falluja. (BBC)

US forces have launched an air strike on suspected insurgents in the Iraqi city of Falluja, the US military says. The military said it targeted militants linked to suspected al-Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, whom it blames for a string of attacks in Iraq. A hospital source said five people were injured in the attack early in the morning, including children.

Retired Iraqi general killed in Mosul. (BBC)

It was reported that gunmen attacked and killed a retired Iraqi general in Mosul as he headed to a mosque for Friday prayers. He had worked for the former US-led Coalition Authority. Major General Salim Majeed Blesh, who had been a top commander in the Iraqi army, was assassinated along with a neighbour who was accompanying him.

July 24

Director of Iraqi state construction company kidnapped in Baghdad. (AFP)

The director of a state-owned Iraqi construction company was kidnapped in Baghdad on his way to work. The captive was named as Raad Adnan, head of the Al-Mansour Contracting Co.

Iraqi ministry official escapes assassination attempt. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

It was reported that the Undersecretary of the Iraqi Interior Ministry for police affairs escaped an assassination attempt in Al-Latifayah area. One of his escorts was killed and another was wounded by the gunfire of armed men.

Two police officers killed in Baghdad. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

It was reported that two elements of the Iraqi police were killed and five others were wounded in the Suwayb area, south of Baghdad, when a checkpoint they were manning on the highway was attacked by gunmen.

July 25

Former regional official during Saddam era killed along with son in Baghdad (Associated Press / AP)

Assailants killed a former regional official during Saddam Hussein's rule and his son in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad, Iraqi police said.

Iraqi forces kill 13 "gunmen" near Ba'qubah. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

A US military spokesman has said that the Iraqi National Guard and police forces killed 13 gunmen during clashes in Buhruz, south of Ba'qubah.

Iraqi cleric forbids killing policemen who do not aid "occupation troops". (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

Shaykh Muhammad Bashar al-Faydi, spokesman for the Muslim Ulema Council, has denounced the armed groups' attacks on Iraqi policemen. In a news conference in Baghdad, Al-Faydi said he believed it was forbidden by religion to kill policemen as long as they did not cooperate with the occupation troops.

Kuwaiti sentenced to death for collaboration with former Iraqi regime. (Kuwaiti news agency Kuna)

Kuwaiti Criminal Court, presided by judge Hamoud Al-Mutawaa, sentenced a national, Muhammad H., to death after being convicted of collaboration with the defunct Iraqi regime. The court had delayed taking a rule in the case several times to give the defence time to prove his innocence. The Public Prosecution had accused the person of holding contacts with a hostile state, supplying the defunct Iraqi regime with military and political information harmful to the country's security and supplying agents with military fatigues. The convict was detained in January 2003.

Sadr boycotts Najaf vote. (Iraqi newspaper Al-Dustur)

Muqtada al-Sadr boycotted elections held in Najaf to choose members of the National Congress to be held in Baghdad by the end of July 2004. He disagreed concerning the mechanism of choosing participants.

Iraqi Kurdistan regional government appoints new ministers. (RFE/RL Iraq Report)

The Irbil-based Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) appointed five new ministers and one deputy minister. Sarkis Aghajan Mamandu was appointed deputy head of government and finance and economy minister. The other appointments are: Barzan Muhsin Dizayee, municipalities and tourism minister; Nazanin Muhammad Waso, reconstruction and housing minister; Falah Mustafa Bakr, regional minister; Azad Izz al-Din Mulla, agriculture and irrigation minister; and Sami Fattah Abd al-Latif Shoresh, culture minister.

July 26

Four die in Mosul truck bombing. (BBC)

Four people have been killed and several wounded in a suicide truck bomb attack at a US base in Mosul. The US military said the truck exploded at around 08:00 about 50 metres from the main gate of the base. An Iraqi woman and her child died, and an Iraqi security guard later died of his wounds. Three US troops and two Iraqi guards were injured. The truck was packed with mortars.

Senior Iraqi police official, two companions killed in Baghdad (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

In al-Bayya area in central Baghdad, Brig-Gen Mus'ab al-Awwadi, director of the Tribal Chiefs Bureau at the Iraqi Interior Ministry, was the victim of an assassination. He and two of his companions were shot dead by unidentified gunmen. The assailants managed to escape.

Two women gunned down in Basra. (BBC)

In Basra, two Iraqi women working as cleaners for coalition forces are shot dead.

Iraqi group issues death sentences against two Pakistani hostages. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi group calling itself the Islamic Army in Iraq has said that it has abducted three people - two Pakistanis and one Iraqi - working for a Kuwaiti company. The group said in a videotape that one of the two Pakistanis works as a technician for US troops, while the other works as a driver for those troops. The Iraqi citizen works as a driver transporting food supplies to hotels hosting Americans. The statement says that investigations were carried out with the Pakistanis, and that death sentences were issued against them in view of what the statement described as the available categorical evidence, in addition to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's statements on the possibility of sending troops to Iraq. The statement added that the Iraqi citizen will be held in custody until interrogation with him is completed. The statement warned the Kuwaiti Al-Tamimi Company that the fate of its employees will be like that of the two Pakistanis unless it halts its activities in Iraq.

Families leave as tension rises in Samarra. (IRIN)

At least 10 families a day are leaving Samarra because of rising tension between US forces and insurgents there, according to humanitarian agencies and religious leaders. Families started leaving the predominantly Sunni Muslim city two weeks ago in fear that US forces were about to attack, Sheikh Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor al-Samarraie, a

Muslim religious leader based in Baghdad, said. Samarra residents are known for their loyalty to former President Saddam Hussain. Families stayed temporarily with relatives in villages outside the city or in Baghdad before returning home about a week ago after negotiations between US forces and religious leaders appeared to calm the situation, al-Samarraye said. But increased numbers of people started leaving again in recent days as tension started rising again, he added. A spokesman for US troops disagreed with Samarraye's assessment of why people wanted to leave. "Insurgents are shelling civilian houses; US troops aren't even in the city," said a spokesman for the 1st Infantry Division.

Garbage cleaner killed in Baghdad mortar attack. (AFP)

An Iraqi garbage cleaner was killed and another man wounded when two mortar rounds fell in the courtyard of a housing complex in the centre of Baghdad next to the Iranian Embassy. The attack occurred at about 6:45 am in an area in the Karkh district on the west bank of the Tigris, not far from the fortified Green Zone area housing the interim Iraqi government and the US embassy.

Iraqi government employees being investigated for cooperation with insurgents. (London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat*)

According to Iraqi military intelligence sources, staff of the defence, interior and justice ministries, among others, have allegedly been providing armed groups with information about government officials, and are monitoring the movements of ministers and prominent figures in key posts. A Defence Ministry source confirmed that Muhammad Majid - an employee in the ministry - was arrested on charges of involvement in financing a fundamentalist group and providing armed groups with information about the ministry and about the key figures who work there.

Ba'athist killed in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

A group of seven unidentified gunmen killed a former leader in the Ba'th Party in Al-Sadr City in Baghdad.

Authorities end restriction on travel to Israel. (London-based newspaper *Al-sharq al-Awsat*)

The Manager of Passports Sabbar al-Atiya said the authorities have cancelled the prohibition to travel to Israel. He said new Iraqi passports would be issued without the famous note of "Bearer is allowed to travel to the entire world except Israel". He added that they started issuing the new passports, which would be valid for one year, on July 15 to replace the travel documents, which were no more valid, issued by the now-defunct Coalition Provisional Authority.

US allegedly attacks Shiite broadcasting station. (Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Al-Taakhi*)

Shia religious authorities (al-Marjiyaa al-Diniyya) in Karbala have accused the American forces and Iraqi police of arbitrarily attacking al-Huda broadcast headquarters attached to al-Huda Islamic Organisation for Culture and Media. Fifty elements participated in the attack. They used sound bombs and intensive shooting, which resulted in big damage to the equipment of the organization and heavy financial losses. The commander of the US forces refused to give any explanation for the attack on the licensed broadcast attached to the organisation of Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Taki al-Muderresi.

July 27

US grants protection to PMOI members in Iraq. (BBC)

The US has granted "protected status" under the Geneva Conventions to 3,800 members of an Iranian opposition group (People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran, PMOI) interned in Iraq. This meant that People's Mujahideen's fighters were not considered belligerents during the Iraq war, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said. But the new status did not affect the US view that the group was a "terrorist organization", Mr Ereli said. "We have determined that they were not belligerents in this conflict and we are according them the human rights protections consistent with the Geneva Conventions," Mr Ereli said in Washington. The new status gives the militants access to the Red Cross and the United Nations refugee agency. They are being held in Camp Ashraf, northeast of Baghdad. Previously, the Iraqi authorities have said they wanted the group to be expelled.

Doctor killed at hospital in Mahmudiya. (BBC)

Unidentified attackers have killed a deputy hospital director in the Iraqi town of Mahmudiya while a mortar attack caused one death in Baghdad. The attackers shot Dr Qassem el-Obaidi from a car as he was driving home from work.

Al-Mada'in Council chairman killed. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

It was reported that a group of unidentified gunmen killed the chairman of Al-Mada'in Council and wounded his two sons.

July 28

At least 51 killed in Iraq suicide bombing in Baquba. (AFP)

At least 51 people were killed and 70 wounded when a suicide bomber blew up a car outside a police station in Baquba. Interior ministry spokesman Sabah Kahdim said the blast left 30 dead from a queue of people outside the building and wounded 40. In addition, 21 passengers on a bus were also reportedly killed.

Five Iraqi security officers killed in Sueira. (AFP)

About 35 insurgents were killed and more than 40 arrested in a joint multinational and Iraqi raid in the town of Sueira, south of Baghdad. Five officers from the Iraqi security forces were killed and 48 others wounded in clashes with insurgents. The Kut region is overwhelming Shiite Muslim and has been largely quiet since the end of an uprising by radical leader Moqtada Sadr earlier this year.

Three sons of Al-Anbar governor kidnapped. (AFP)

Three sons of the governor of Al-Anbar province were kidnapped by gunmen who barged into the official's private home in Ramadi, police said. Unknown gunmen barged into the governor's home, snatched his sons aged between 15 and 30, and then torched the building while Governor Abdul Karim Burghis al-Rawi was at work.

Iraqi Islamic Party announces withdrawal from congress elections. (Iraqi Islamic Party radio Dar al-Salam)

In a statement issued by the Iraqi Islamic Party on the elections of the candidates of the Iraqi National Congress, the party said it decided to withdraw from the elections of the candidates of the Iraqi National Congress in all the country's governorates, and

not to recognize their results. The party Political Bureau said this decision was due to widespread forgeries and threats involved in the process.

Armed group executes two Pakistani hostages, releases Iraqi driver. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An armed group in Iraq calling itself the Islamic Army [Al-Jaysh al-Islami] has announced that it executed two Pakistani hostages whom it kidnapped. They worked for a Kuwaiti company that supplies the US troops in Iraq with foodstuffs. The group distributed a videotape in which it showed the bodies of the two hostages after killing them. The same group said that it released an Iraqi driver after finding out that he was “deceived and after announcing his repentance”.

New Mosul Governor appointed. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Manarah*)

It was reported that Durayd Kashmulah was appointed as Mosul (Ninawah) Governor, succeeding late Dr Usamah Kashmulah who was killed two weeks ago. The new governor is a retired army general.

Abusultan tribes chieftain withdraws from National Conference. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Jaridah*)

It was reported that Shaykh Ghassan Abud Al-Haymis, tribal chief of the Abusultan tribes, has withdrawn from the national conference because the preparatory committee does not represent all factions in the Iraqi society.

Chaldeans protest in Arbil. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

It was reported that several hundreds of Chaldeans [Christian group connected to Assyrian ethnicity] staged a demonstration in Arbil, protesting their neglect by both Kurdistan and Iraqi Governments.

Ba’athist killed in Karbala. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

It was reported that in two separate incidents in Karbala governorate, unidentified gunmen killed a former Ba’thist and a former security officer, and managed to escape.

Journalist arrested. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

It was reported that the Iraqi police arrested *Al-Shira* Chief Editor Dr Sattar Ghanim on charges of involvement in the killing of a colonel in the Iraqi Army. The report says that Ghanim has published an article saying that the Iraqi Intelligence Agency is infiltrated by Ba’athists.

July 29

Iraqi group threatens to behead Somali hostage. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

A group calling itself Al-Tawhid and Al-Jihad said that it kidnapped Ali Ahmad Musa, a Somali driver working for a Kuwaiti firm, which they accused of supplying the US forces in Iraq with food items. The group threatened to behead the hostage if the firm does not cease operations in Iraq within 48 hours.

Sadr cracks down on followers. (Iraqi National Congress newspaper *Al-Mutamar*)

Muqtada al-Sadr has ordered the creation of a committee to deal with removing pictures of him that adversely affect him and his movement. Sadr had been told that some of his supporters had forced people to put his pictures on the buildings and the

stores, otherwise they would be punished. He denounced the behaviour of some of his supporters, describing them as "spies and malicious". He pledged to maintain control of Imam Ali's shrine and its surroundings. He said a committee would be formed to look into the claims of Najaf people offended by his followers.

By-law for media adopted. (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Al-Ittihad*)

The National Board of Media and Communications has issued a bylaw to organise media broadcasting in Iraq. Accordingly, the broadcasting stations would work under criteria and standards approved by the higher international institute of civil and political rights along with the international announcement of human rights, said Siyamend Othman, head of the board. The bylaw is based on accuracy, impartiality and decency. It opposes biased materials that encourage violence and ethnic expressions. Othman added that the board would respect international standards regarding freedom of expression.

July 30

Falluja hit by renewed fighting. (BBC)

Renewed clashes overnight in Falluja have left at least nine Iraqis dead and several injured, local doctors say. US forces called in air support after insurgents attacked a joint patrol of US marines and Iraqi troops, an American military spokesman said. According to residents, a house in the Shuhada neighbourhood was destroyed.

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