

Chronology of Events in Iraq, May 2004*

May 1

Three foreigners, three Iraqis wounded in roadside bomb in Mosul. (Agence France Presse / AFP)

Three foreigners and three Iraqis were wounded when a bomb exploded in Mosul, the local police said. The roadside bomb blew up as a convoy of five sports utility vehicles (SUVs), typically used by the US-led coalition, sped through the city. At least three foreigners were wounded, along with three Iraqis traveling in separate cars.

Two killed, Sadr aide arrested in Hilla raid. (Reuters)

Two Iraqis were reportedly killed and an aide to Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr was arrested in a raid by troops of U.S.-led occupation forces in the Iraqi city of Hilla. Officials of the Polish-led contingent of multinational troops deployed in the area said they had no information on the incident, as did a spokeswoman for the U.S. military headquarters in Baghdad. Hilla residents said the soldiers stormed a meeting of religious students and tribal representatives in the city, and opened fire. Television footage of the site of the raid showed pools of blood and human remains, as well as bullet holes pockmarking interior walls of the building where the meeting was held.

Police and militia agree to 3-day truce in Karbala. (Associated Press / AP)

Officials in the Iraqi Shiite holy city Karbala said local dignitaries had mediated a three-day truce between police and the al-Mahdi Army. The officials said efforts were underway to arrange a truce between the al-Mahdi militia and coalition forces around Karbala as well.

Al-Anbar governor escapes assassination attempt. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Zaman*)

It was reported that Al-Anbar governor, Abd-al-Karim Birjis, escaped an assassination attempt when unidentified individuals attacked him with a grenade bomb that exploded near his car. No casualties were caused in the incident that took place in Al-Ramadi.

May 2

Council member killed in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Zaman*)

Unidentified gunmen reportedly assassinated the chairman of the Municipality Council in Al-Sha'b district in Baghdad.

* *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.*

May 3

Iraqis in Basra protest at treatment of prisoners. (Lebanese Hezbollah TV Al-Manar)

Hundreds of Iraqis in Basra took to the streets to denounce the practices of the US and British troops against Iraqi prisoners.

Tribal chief arrested in Kirkuk over pipeline attacks. (AFP)

A leading Shiite Muslim tribal chief in Kirkuk region has been arrested by US troops for allegedly supporting attacks on oil pipelines, a local official said. Sheikh Kazem Ahmad, head of the Al-Badir clans, was arrested in the Hittine area.

Coalition accepts resignation of Iraq Human Rights Minister. (AFP)

The US-led coalition has accepted the resignation of Iraq's human rights minister, Abdel Basset Turki, who quit his post on April 8 in anger over US military offensives on Fallujah and Najaf.

Iraqi accused of cooperation with coalition killed in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper Al-Zaman)

Unidentified gunmen killed a person and threw his body near a Governing Council's house in Al-A'zamiyah district in Baghdad. The hands of the victim were reportedly tied with a rope. A piece of paper reading: "this is the fate of those who betray their country and people" was left beside the body.

Students in Mosul protest the new Iraqi flag. (Iraqi newspaper Al-Furat)

Dozens of students in Mosul demonstrated against the new Iraqi flag.

May 4

Gunmen kill local council member in Basra. (AP)

Gunmen reportedly shot and killed a city council member in Basra. City council member Radi Abdul-Zahra al-Hilaifi was gunned down by unidentified gunmen at night while driving in Basra. Al-Hilaifi was the head of a small, local Islamic party that opposed Saddam Hussein. Al-Hilaifi fled Iraq in 1991 after Saddam crushed an uprising by Shiite Muslims in southern Iraq and returned to Iraq after the U.S. invasion.

Iraqi Governing Council against reinstatement of Republican Guard general in Fallujah. (Iraqi newspaper Al-Mada)

Iraqi Governing Council seeks the Coalition Provisional Authority not to nominate General Muhammad al-Muhammadi to assume security in Al-Fallujah because he had a role in the 1991 revolution against the Shi'is. IGC has no objection to nominating General Muhammad Latif because he spent years in the former regime's jails.

Iraqi Defence Minister excludes Al-Fallujah forces from Iraqi Army. (Iraqi newspaper Al-Adalah)

Several national political and religious forces in Iraq reacted to the formation of a force from members of the former Republican Guard in Al-Fallujah. The Defence Minister issued a decree to exclude this force from the Iraqi Army. Fallujah Republican Guard forces issued a statement to voice their reaction against this decree.

Unidentified group issues black list in Al-Haswah. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Zaman*)

In Al-Haswah district to the south of Baghdad, citizens complain that an unidentified group issued a list including 98 names of citizens of the district accusing them of spying for the US forces and threatening to kill them. The sources said that most of the names have nothing to do with the US forces. It was reported that the group attempted to kill two persons whose names are included in the list but they missed their target killing a young boy and a child from the same family.

Chief editor of *Al-Sabah* resigns. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

Isma'il Zayir, chief editor of *Al-Sabah* newspaper has resigned from his post in *Al-Sabah* newspaper. Zayir said that Al-Sabah is backed by the "occupation" forces whereas close sources to the newspaper said that it is issued by the Iraqi Media Network, affiliated with the occupation authority. Zayir announced that he will publish a new independent newspaper under the name of *Al-Sabah al-Jadid*.

Fallujah's Kurds flee Ba'athists and Islamists. (Institute for War and Peace Reporting / IWPR)

A community displaced once before has to flee again to avoid being caught up in Baathist and Islamist resistance in Fallujah. Hundreds of families from Fallujah who refused to join the fight against the United States military have sought refuge in the Kurdish area of Iraq. At least 300 Kurdish families – perhaps 1,800 people in all – have fled the town and are now with friends or family in Suleimaniyah, Arbil, Kirkuk, Kalar and Khanaqin, say Kurdish officials. Some refugees were intimidated by accusations that they sided with the Americans, while others feared being driven by former Ba'athists, Iraqi Islamists, and foreign fighters to take part in the conflict. "Most of our neighbours were Ba'athists and they wanted our men to resist the Americans," said a Kurd born in Fallujah. She and her family were living in the Jolan district, the scene of heavy fighting. Their house was destroyed in a United States bombing raid, so they moved to the house of her in-laws on another street. Her family was one of thousands expelled from their home in Kurdistan to central and southern regions of Iraq by the Ba'ath regime in 1975, after the collapse of a Kurdish revolt. In Kalar alone, 140 families recently have registered with the Ministry of Human Rights, Internally Displaced and Anfal Victims, according to the ministry's director in Kalar, Aryan Rauf. According to Rauf, most of the refugees are temporarily housed with families but the ministry is working with the Red Cross and Kurdistan Children's Nest, a local non-government organisation, to supply them with tents and blankets. "The Baathists used to threaten us with death even when our children had a fight in the streets," another said.

May 5

Turkomans allege confiscation of their properties in Kirkuk. (Turkish Anatolian News Agency)

Kemal Beyatli, Chairperson of the Iraqi Turks Cultural and Solidarity Association, alleged that *de facto* authorities have confiscated the properties of expatriate Turkomans in Kirkuk. He said that the confiscation is regularly ordered in civil cases by courts in Kirkuk.

US General admits at least 3 prisoners killed by U.S. personnel in Iraq. (US newspaper *USA Today*)

US Army officials acknowledged that three detainees have been killed, including one who was trying to escape, and 10 other cases of prisoner deaths are under investigation. The killings were uncovered by Army criminal investigators who had been asked to look at 35 cases, including the deaths of 25 prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan since December 2002.

Demonstration in front of the Abu Ghuraib prison. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Hundreds of Iraqis staged demonstrations called for by the Muslim Ulema Council in front of Abu Ghuraib prison, protesting the mistreatment and humiliation of the Iraqi detainees by the US forces.

Two Ba'athists killed in Al-Kut. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Two former regime followers were killed and four others were injured when they came under fire by unidentified gunmen in Al-Kut.

Three killed by roadside bomb in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Three people were killed and others were injured in a roadside bomb explosion in Al-Qanat Street in Baghdad.

US forces killed three civilians in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

US forces killed three Iraqis by mistake in Al-Taji district to the north of Baghdad. It was reported that the victims were in a car when one of the passengers tried to light a cigarette using a pistol-like lighter, the US soldiers thought it was a real gun and started shooting.

May 6

US troops take key Najaf building, kill 41 persons. (British Broadcasting Corporation / BBC)

US tanks have surged into the Iraqi holy city of Najaf to take control of the governor's office amid fierce fighting with Shia gunmen. Troops moved into the city's suburbs to draw out militiamen loyal to cleric Moqtada Sadr and allow the armour to sweep in largely unopposed. The US military reported killing 41 militiamen in Kufa, just outside Najaf. Doctors in the city said that two women and a child had been killed and nine people wounded. Najaf's new governor, Adnan al-Zorfi, fought in the 1991 Shia uprising against Saddam Hussein and spent time in his prisons. He denounced Sadr and called on the Mahdi Army to disarm, telling a news conference in Baghdad that Najaf had virtually died as a city.

Five Iraqis killed in suicide blast. (Reuters)

Five Iraqi civilians and one U.S. soldier were killed and 26 people were wounded in a suicide bombing in central Baghdad, a U.S. military spokesman said. He said the wounded were 23 Iraqi civilians and at least three U.S. soldiers. The attack took place in the early morning as cars were queuing at a bridge leading into the U.S. military and civil headquarters in the centre of the Iraqi capital.

Five Kurdish party members wounded in Baqubah blast. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan satellite TV KurdSat TV)

Five Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) cadres were injured when two explosive devices blew up near their offices in Ba'qubah. Substantial damage was caused to the building.

Iraqi prisoners on conditional release. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV) "

The Coalition Provisional Authority has released some prisoners in Abu Ghraib reportedly on condition. The authorities have received guarantees from tribal leaders or those released that, if they repeat their previous actions, there will be a heavier punishment. The guarantors may also be punished.

Iraqi council appoints new human rights minister. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Kurdistani Nuwe*)

The Iraqi Governing Council announced the appointment of Bahktiyar Mustafa Amin as Iraqi human rights minister replacing Dr Abd-al-Basit Turki who resigned from the post. Bahktiyar Amin is a Kurd and was the undersecretary of the Human Rights Ministry before assuming his new post.

May 7

Four Iraqi policemen killed in Mosul. (AFP)

A roadside bomb and small arms attack claimed the lives of four policemen and left one other officer seriously wounded in Mosul, according to police and medical sources. The bomb exploded and gunmen raked the men's police car with gunfire at 1:30 pm in the city's southern Mamoun district. The wounded policeman was listed in critical condition. According to the US-led coalition, more than 350 policemen have been killed in Iraq since the toppling of the Ba'ath regime in 2003.

Agriculture department head reportedly killed in Kirkuk. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan satellite TV KurdSat)

Unidentified perpetrators killed the director of the Kirkuk Agriculture Department, Hiwa Najib Muhammad, and his driver in Kirkuk during an ambush in which they opened fire on his vehicle while he was heading for work. Killing of officials in Kirkuk has notably increased during the last few weeks.

Iraqi Sunnis, Shi'is participate in unified prayer in Baghdad mosque. (Lebanese Hezbollah TV Al-Manar)

Some 15,000 Iraqis of the supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr have participated in a unified prayer with Sunni Muslims in the Al-A'zamiyah area in central Baghdad. Al-Sadr's supporters began to arrive in the area two hours before prayers, coming from Al-Sadr city to the Imam Abu-Hanifah Mosque in Al-A'zamiyah.

Journalists killed in ambush in their way to Najaf. (US newspaper *Los Angeles Times*)

A leading Polish war correspondent and an Algerian colleague were killed south of Baghdad when their car was raked by machine-gun fire on a remote stretch of road that is notorious for deadly ambushes. Waldemar Milewicz, 48, an award-winning television journalist who had covered conflicts in Bosnia, Cambodia and Rwanda, was killed as he and his crew were driving to cover fighting in Najaf. Video editor Mounir

Bouamrane also was slain as he tried to pull Milewicz from the disabled car, a cameraman wounded in the attack said.

Al-Sadr aide declares rewards for captured US soldiers and Governing Council members. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Ahali*)

Al-Sadr aide Abd-al-Sattar al-Bahadili announced a 250,000 Iraqi dinar reward, equivalent to 170 dollars, for anyone who captures a US female soldier, 100,000 Iraqi dinar reward, equivalent to 70 dollars, to anyone who kidnaps a male soldier, and 25,000 Iraqi dinar only, equivalent to 15 dollars, for capturing a Governing Council member. During his Friday sermon "delivered before thousands of Al-Sadr supporters in Basra, Al-Bahadili said that whoever captures a female soldier should deliver her to the office of Martyr Al-Sadr, where she would be treated as a slave".

May 8

Bomb kills three Iraqis in Habhab. (AP)

Attackers set off a bomb outside the house of a police official, killing three members of his family and wounding three others. The bomb attack occurred in the town of Habhab, 12 miles north of Baqouba, with the blast hitting the home of a police non-commissioned officer, Muayyad Ayad. Two women and a male relative were killed.

Gunmen attacked Mayor's home in Muqdadiyah. (AP)

In the town of Muqdadiyah, three gunmen opened fire on the house of the town mayor, sparking a gunbattle with his security guards. One policeman was wounded.

Iraqi prisoners wounded in roadside bombing. (AFP)

Seven Iraqi detainees scheduled for release by the US-led coalition were injured when a convoy was hit by a roadside bomb, according to a military statement. The Iraqis suffered multiple shrapnel wounds in the attack near Habbaniya, west of Baghdad, as they were being moved between detention centres.

US troops arrest head of Sadr office in Sadr City. (AFP)

US troops arrested a top lieutenant to Shiite rebel cleric Moqtada Sadr in Baghdad. Sayed Amer al-Husseini, the head of Sadr's office in his stronghold of Sadr City, was captured when 20 US military vehicles drove up to Sadr's office and sealed off the area. The troops raided his office in Baghdad and arrested Husseini and four others after a gun battle in which a Sadr supporter was killed and one wounded.

May 9

Fifteen Iraqis released from Abu Ghraib prison and returned to Fallujah. (AP)

Two trucks brought 15 Iraqis to the edge of Fallujah after they were released from the Abu Ghraib prison, U.S. Marines said. The 15 were the first residents of the Fallujah area to be freed from Abu Ghraib since the end of the Marine siege of Fallujah in April 2004.

Baghdad market bombing kills six, wounds nine. (AFP)

Six people were killed and nine wounded when a bomb ripped through a crowded Baghdad marketplace, Iraqi police and witnesses said. It was reported that the bomb had been hidden in a box of bananas in the Baya market.

Foreigners injured in Baghdad hotel blast. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

It was reported that eight foreigners have been injured in an explosion that rocked Al-Fusul al-Arba'ah [Four Seasons] Hotel in the centre of the Iraqi capital.

Cleric's forces battle for section of Baghdad. (US newspaper *Los Angeles Times*)

U.S. soldiers and Shiite militiamen exchanged heavy fire on the streets of Sadr City, a stronghold of cleric Muqtada Sadr. Sadr's forces appeared to make a concerted effort to seize control of parts of the district, witnesses and officials said. U.S. authorities said the attempt was repulsed, though continued fighting was reported. U.S. officials said 19 militiamen, all carrying rocket-propelled-grenade launchers, were killed in the fighting. U.S. officials said the fighters took to the streets one day after the arrest of two men suspected of being a lieutenant in and a financier for Sadr's militia. A number of militiamen were arrested, said the chief U.S. military spokesman in Iraq. U.S. forces also seized a large number of arms when they evicted militiamen who had attempted to retake Sadr's former office in the neighborhood, he said.

Militiamen attempted to take over at least one police station and a bank, while blocking roads and setting up checkpoints to restrict entry to Sadr City, according to military and civilian reports from the area. There was no immediate word on any U.S. or civilian casualties.

Meantime, an uneasy standoff has persisted in Najaf, where more than 2,000 U.S. troops are massed outside the city and have frequently clashed with Sadr's militia.

It was reported that U.S. forces made their farthest push yet into Kufa, trading fire with gunmen on both sides of the road. Two civilians were killed and 10 were wounded in the battles before the tanks withdrew, hospital officials said. Three houses were destroyed.

Newspaper office attacked. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Da'wah*)

Al-Musharakah newspaper's headquarters came under RPG attack by unidentified gunmen at night.

May 10

Group threatens to kidnap, kill foreign workers in Iraq's Basra. (Qatari *Al-Jazeera* satellite TV)

A group calling itself the Al-Taff [the battle in which Shi'a Imam Husayn was killed] Martyrs Brigades has said that all workers of foreign and Arab companies in Basra, particularly the Kuwaiti companies, are target for abduction and killing. The group warned those working for these companies from walking in the city streets because they are the same as the occupation forces' personnel.

Demonstrators in Baghdad protest prisoners abuse at Abu-Ghurayb prison. (Iraqi Shi'a group's Iran-based radio station *Voice of the Mujahidin*)

Thousands of demonstrators in Baghdad demanded putting an end to violations against prisoners, in addition to a public trial of the soldiers who carried out the crimes against the prisoners.

Indonesian, Malaysian killed in Kirkuk. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Khabat*)

A number of unknown armed men attacked and opened fire on a vehicle which carried four people in Kirkuk. As a result of which a Malaysian and an Indonesian nationals died; a New Zealand national who was assisting the Malaysian was severely injured; and the driver who is an Iraqi citizen was injured. No further details available.

Three policemen killed in Baghdad district. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

It was reported that three policemen were killed and another one injured, in addition to a number of civilians, when their patrol came under attack by unidentified gunmen in Al-Durah district in Baghdad.

May 11

Most Iraqi detainees 'arrested by mistake'. (UK newspaper *Financial Times*)

Coalition military intelligence officers believed 70-90 per cent of Iraqi detainees were "arrested by mistake", according to a leaked Red Cross report on prisoner abuse. The confidential report, given to the US and British governments in February 2004 but covering events in March to November 2003, describes a pattern of indiscriminate arrests involving destruction of property and brutal behaviour towards suspects and their families. Ill-treatment during capture was frequent and "appeared to go beyond the reasonable, legitimate and proportional use of force", the report said. Such behaviour "seemed to reflect a usual modus operandi by certain CF [coalition forces] battle groups". The report said arrests tended to follow a pattern. "Arresting authorities entered houses usually after dark, breaking down doors, waking up residents roughly, yelling orders, forcing family members into one room under military guard while searching the rest of the house and further breaking doors, cabinets and other property. "Sometimes they arrested all adult males present in a house, including elderly, handicapped or sick people. Treatment often included pushing people around, insulting, taking aim with rifles, punching and kicking and striking with rifles." The report said some coalition military intelligence officers estimated that "between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of the persons deprived of their liberty in Iraq had been arrested by mistake".

Four killed, 25 hurt in Kirkuk explosion. (AFP)

Four people were killed and 25 wounded in an explosion in a Kurdish district of Kirkuk.

Militiamen fire in air to disperse demonstration in Najaf. (AFP)

Militiamen of cleric Moqtada Sadr fired into the air to try to break up demonstrators who were demanding they leave their positions near a sacred Shiite shrine in the city. The demonstration followed calls by senior Shiite religious leaders for Sadr's Mahdi Army to leave the city after continued clashes and a major downturn in economic activity inside the city. Mahdi Army forces have been bunkered down near the Imam Ali mosque in the centre of the city where they have stockpiled weapons and clash almost daily with US forces in the area.

US forces kill 13 Al-Sadr supporters in Kufa. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

In Al-Kufah, the US occupation forces killed 13 supporters of the Shi'i cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in clashes that took place last night, as a US military official said.

Syrian Kurds reportedly flee to Iraqi Kurdistan. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Khabat*)

It was reported that nearly 150 Kurdish families from Syria have fled to the parts of Kurdistan region and have settled in the outskirts of Mosul Governorate. They reportedly fled the Syrian pressure which increased recently, especially after the recent killings of the Kurds in Qamishli and other Kurdish areas in Syria by the country's army and security department.

Najaf groups conclude deal with al-Sadr. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mu'tamar*)

Sadr al-Din al-Qabbanji, official in charge of Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) in Al-Najaf, said that Al-Mahdi army will leave the city during the course of this week in accordance with the deal concluded between the various parties in the city and approved by the four major religious authorities.

Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq protests reintegration of Ba'athists. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Adalah*)

A demonstration was staged in Baghdad by SCIRI's against the reintegration of the Ba'athists. The report adds that the demonstrators issued a statement reiterating their support to the religious authority Al-Sayyid Al-Sistani "who has the final word in Iraq". The statement recommends watching the formation of the Iraqi security organs so that "the entire former criminal" would be excluded. The statement has also called for continuing the de-Ba'athification process.

May 12

Filipino workers attacked in Iraq (BBC)

A group of Filipino civilians has been attacked at a US military camp in Iraq. One man was killed in the mortar attack and at least three injured, according to a spokesman for the Philippine embassy in Baghdad. The men were working as contractors at Camp Anaconda, in the Sunni triangle region north of Baghdad. An estimated 3,000 Filipino civilians are working in Iraq, together with 100 police, soldiers and medical personnel.

Thirty Islamic militants arrested in northern Iraq. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

Iraqi Kurdistan authorities reported arresting 30 militants of Ansar al-Islam group in Suleimaniya.

Al-Sadr aide denies agreeing to withdraw militia from Al-Najaf. (London-based newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*)

Al-Sayyid Sadr-al-Din] Al-Qubbanji, representative of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) in Al-Najaf, organized a demonstration to demand the departure of the Al-Mahdi Army from the city of Al-Najaf on the grounds that there was an agreement between SCIRI and Muqtada al-Sadr to move the Al-Mahdi Army outside the city. Al-Mahdi Army claimed that no such agreement was concluded between SCIRI and al-Sadr supporters. Al-Sadr's supporters also denied

that the Al-Hawzah [Shi'a religious seminary] had issued statements calling on the Al-Mahdi Army to leave Al-Najaf.

Muslim Ulema Council head affirms “jihad” against occupation. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Ahali*)

Shaykh Harith al-Dari, secretary general of the Muslim Ulema Council, reportedly said: "The Jihad against the occupation does not require a fatwa or call by religious leaders or the patriotic people loving their country," adding that "all Iraqis, Sunnis, and Shi'is are fighting the occupation and the traitors and Mosad elements standing behind them."

Governing Council President says former officers may be recruited. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Iraqi Governing Council President Izz al-Din Salim in a press conference held in Baghdad said that the former security elements who were not involved in crimes against the Iraqi people can be employed to “benefit from their long experience”.

Al-Sadr says Al-Mahdi Army will not be dissolved until Iraqi sovereignty. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

Shi'i religious leader Muqtada al-Sadr in a press conference held in Al-Najaf said that he will not dissolve Al-Mahdi Army until after the formation of an elected Iraqi government.

May 13

Tribal chief concludes deal with US forces for the release of female prisoners. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Manar*)

It was reported that an agreement was concluded between the US Forces Representative Colonel Brian and Shaykh Hisham Najam al-Dulaymi, tribal chief of Abu-Ghurayb district and chief of the National Forum of Iraqi Tribes to end acts of violence and attacks against the US forces in the district for the release of the Iraqi female prisoners from Abu-Ghurayb Prison and to stop the raiding of the mosques and homes.

Baghdad University students hold anti-Ba'athist demonstration. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Bayan*)

An anti-Baa'thist demonstration was staged by Baghdad University students. The demonstration broke out after the dismissal of the head of the Persian language department and his replacement by a supporter of the former regime who is believed to have a bad record with the previous regime.

Minister says physicians kidnapped by former intelligence services. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Hadath*)

The Minister of Interior made a statement holding the members of the former intelligence services responsible for kidnapping the physicians "to force them, as well as the scientific cadres, to leave the country."

Ba'athist killed in Al-Amarah. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mada*)

Unknown gunmen killed a former Ba'th Party member in Al-Amarah Governorate.

Tribal chief killed in Ba'qubah. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

It was reported that a tribal chief and his daughter were killed in a bomb explosion in front of his house in Al-Muqdadiyah district. Two others were injured in the incident.

May 14

US frees hundreds of Abu Ghraib prisoners. (Xinhua News Agency)

US forces freed hundreds of Iraqi prisoners from the notorious Abu Ghraib jail, which has been the platform of prison abuse scandals. Several buses filled with detainees, escorted by US military vehicles, pulled out of the prison, toward the high way, heading to the capital.

Iraqi says UK forces tortured and killed his son. (AP)

An Iraqi man told an Arab television station that U.K. troops tortured and killed his son in detention, and then apologized and offered him \$3,000 in compensation for the death. In an interview with Al-Arabiya satellite TV network, Davood Salim said his son, Bahaa Dawood Salim Mousa, and six other Iraqis were arrested September 14 "without any justified reason" while working at Ibn al-Haitham hotel in Basra. "After two days of torture, he was killed," the father said. "I saw my son's body. His nose was broken, three of his ribs were broken." "The British commander sent us an apology, of which I have a copy, saying that they are sorry for killing him with no reason in their detention centers," he said. "Then they offered us \$3,000 as compensation for my son." In London, the Ministry of Defence said there was "an interim payment" paid to the family of about \$3,000 and it was accepted. "Compensation is made without admission of liability on the part of the (Ministry of Defense) or culpability on the part of British forces personnel, and reflects the local norms," the department added. It said the compensation payment in the Mousa case was one of three made following fatalities. It didn't name the two other people killed but said the total payments added up to GBP8,125. The ministry said the U.K. made a total of 57 compensation payments relating to fatalities, personal injury, property damage and road traffic accidents, and that they added up to GBP72,224. It said the figures dated from January and were the latest available. A High Court judge in London allowed Mousa's family and 12 other families to proceed with a civil case against the government.

Shootings, explosion in Samawah kill one Iraqi. (Kyodo News)

Shootings broke out in the city of Samawah around an area where armed supporters of militant Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr had gathered, and a separate explosion in the city killed at least one Iraqi security force member, police and witnesses said.

Coalition Authority issued new regulations on demonstrations in Iraq (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

The Coalition Authority has issued new regulations on holding demonstrations in Iraq, stipulating that the organizing party must give 24-hour prior notice and must indicate the place and the maximum number of people participating in the demonstration.

Turkoman National Party leader killed in Kirkuk. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

It was reported that Mustafa Kamal Bayaji, leader of the Turkoman National Party and his driver were killed when a US military vehicle hit their car in Kirkuk.

May 15

Demonstration against the new Iraqi flag in Samara. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Ittijah al-Akhar*)

A demonstration was staged in Samara against the new Iraqi flag. It was reported that the demonstrators have raised the old Iraqi flag on several buildings.

May 16

Iraqi family killed by rocket attack. (Qatari *Al-Jazeera* satellite TV)

Two Iraqi women and two-year-old twin girls have been killed and others wounded, all of whom were from one family, when a rocket fell on their house in Shatt al-Arab area in Basra. The house is located near a British military base and a hotel used by British soldiers.

Civil defence officer killed in Al-Diwaniyah. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Unidentified gunmen killed a colonel in the Civil Defence Forces in Al-Diwaniyah Governorate. Perpetrators managed to escape.

May 17

Car bomb kills head of Iraq Governing Council, seven other Iraqis. (UK newspaper *The Guardian*)

The head of the Iraqi Governing Council was killed in a suicide car bombing as he waited in his vehicle at a US-controlled checkpoint. Abdel-Zahraa Othman, a Shia Muslim, who was most widely known as Izzadine Saleem, was one of eight Iraqis killed in the blast. He was travelling in a five-vehicle convoy with a police escort, and waiting to go into the green zone, the coalition headquarters in Baghdad, when an adjacent car exploded. The new Council President, Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer, said it was unclear if Saleem had been targeted, or was the victim of a random attack. He said Saleem had been on his way to a daily Council meeting. Saleem, a name he took while previously in exile, was a writer, philosopher and political activist who served as editor of several newspapers and magazines. He was the leader of the Islamic Dawa movement in the southern Iraqi city of Basra. Five of the dead were from Mr Saleem's entourage, while two were members of the Iraqi security forces.

May 18

Two civilian foreigners killed in Mosul. (AP)

Gunmen opened fire on two civilian cars believed to be carrying foreigners, killing two and injuring another, witnesses said.

Grand Ayatollah Sistani urges Iraqis to protest armed presence in holy cities. (AFP)

Iraqis were urged to protest against any armed presence in the Shiite holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, in a statement issued by the office of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. "The office of Sayed Sistani instructs citizens in all cities and provinces not to come to Najaf for the time being, considering the dangerous situation in this holy city," said an aide in Sistani's office. "Citizens are instead urged to gather in provincial government buildings and local mosques to protest the lack of respect for the sanctities of Najaf and Karbala and the homes of the great religious authorities and to demand that all armed presence in both cities come to an end." The statement, which does not bear the official stamp of the office, was communicated to Sistani's representatives and deputies throughout Iraq.

Fighting in Karbala killed eight Iraqis. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Qasim al-Mushtarak*)

Fierce fighting between Al-Sadr's followers and the coalition forces took place in Karbala, only 100 metres away from the Imam Husayn holy shrine in the city. Health sources said that at least eight Iraqis were killed and 13 others were injured in the clashes. Al-Sadr Aide Qays al-Khaza'li denied Al-Mahdi Army's involvement in the attack on Al-Sistani's house in Al-Najaf on May 17.

Police officer killed in Baghdad. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mashriq*)

Unidentified gunmen killed a police colonel in front of his house in Baghdad and managed to escape.

May 19

Former Ba'athists being recruited for elite security squad. (Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail*)

Iraq's government is scrambling to find members for an elite security team to protect top officials, but time is so short and quality candidates so scarce that former Ba'athist bodyguards and special forces are being recruited. "Now we will recruit people who have already worked in this field, to shorten the training time," said Hilmi Bassim, chief of staff at the Interior Ministry, helping create the force.

Civilian worker shot dead in northern Iraq. (AP)

Andrew Harris, 33, was shot and killed while driving on a road in northern Iraq.

Agency to fight "terrorism" established. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

Interior Minister Samir al-Sumayda'i declared the formation of the National Organization for Fighting Terrorism and Sabotage.

Black list in Al-Sadr City. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Nahdah*)

An engineer Al-Sadr City in Baghdad reported that he could not leave his house for two weeks because his name was included on a list of people to be assassinated by an armed group in the city, a phenomenon that has been wide spread lately in the city.

Iran-based senior cleric confirms "authorization" of Iraq's Al-Sadr. (Iraqi newspaper *Ishraqat Al-Sadr*)

Ayatollah Kazim al-Husayni al-Ha'iri, who lives in Iran, has denied reports he has withdrawn his "authorization" from Muqtada al-Sadr's.

Demonstration against al-Mahdi Army in Karbala. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Adalah*)

Citizens in Karbala staged a demonstration protesting against the acts of looting and destruction in their city and calling on the fighters to evict the holy city.

41 dead in U.S. attack on Iraqi wedding party. (Deutsche Presse Agentur / DPA)

A U.S. helicopter attack on a wedding party killed up to 41 people in Iraq, eyewitness reports claimed. The attack reportedly happened in the early hours of the day in Makar al Dhib, a village of about 500 people near the west Iraqi town of al Kaim on the Syrian border. Eyewitnesses in the area reported that the fatalities included many women and children. Medical sources put the death toll at 21, while 34 people were reported injured, 14 of whom were said to be in a life threatening condition. The helicopter reportedly targeted the party after guests fired celebratory shots in the air, a common tradition at Iraqi weddings. Al Arabiya television broadcast pictures of men carrying bodies, including children, to freshly dug graves.

US forces raid the human rights organisation. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

The US forces raided the headquarters of the Human Rights Organization in Al-Diwaniyah Governorate.

May 20

New group assumes responsibility for the killing of Governing Council President. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

A group calling itself "Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad" [Divine Unity and Holy War] declared its responsibility for the assassination of late Governing Council [IGC] President Izz al-Din Salim in Baghdad on May 18. A statement made by the group led by Al-Zarqawi said that a Saudi national, Abu Sallamah al-Hijazi carried out the suicide attack and threatened for more attacks against the IGC members and the occupation forces.

30,000 fled from Karbala. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Nahdah*)

An official source in the Health Ministry reported that the ministry has been facing acute difficulties in providing health services for over 30,000 people who left their homes in Karbala to the surrounding areas fleeing the clashes between Al-Sadr followers and the coalition forces in the city.

Iraqi police, US forces raid Chalabi's home and party offices. (US news paper *The Washington Post*)

Iraqi police, backed by U.S. soldiers, raided Chalabi's home and the offices of the Iraqi National Congress, a coalition of parties that opposed the government of Saddam Hussain. Until recently, the group received \$335,000 a month from the Pentagon for help in gathering prewar intelligence about Hussein's government and in finding his top lieutenants after the invasion. Chalabi, a longtime exile leader who was once the Pentagon's preferred choice to be Iraq's postwar leader, characterized the raids as retaliation for his criticism of U.S. policy in Iraq. The inquiries against the party are focusing on allegations of corruption, kidnapping and robbery, and on a U.S. suspicion that one of Chalabi's closest advisers is a paid agent of the Iranian intelligence service, according to U.S., INC and Iraqi police officials. The adviser,

Aras Habib, has a long working relationship with the Defense Intelligence Agency and is now a fugitive.

May 21

Al-Jazeera correspondent killed in Karbala. (BBC)

Among those killed in the latest violence in Iraq was an employee of the Arab satellite TV station, al-Jazeera. The station, whose offices in Afghanistan and Iraq have been hit by fire from US forces, led its news bulletin with the death. Rashid Hamid Wali was killed during clashes in Karbala between American forces and insurgents supporting Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr's militia.

May 22

Car bomb hit residence of Iraq's deputy interior minister, killing five. (Xinhua News Agency)

A suspected car bomb blew up in front of the residence of Iraq's Deputy Interior Minister in Baghdad, killing at least five people, police said. Most of the killed were security guards.

Four wounded in two bomb attacks in Iraqi town of Baqubah. (AFP)

Two people were wounded in a failed assassination attempt against the mayor of Baqubah, the Iraqi official's security team said. A device blew up as the convoy of Hisham Atta Shahata, head of the city council and president of Baqubah University, drove down a road 10 kilometres south of the town. Later, two policemen were wounded when another bomb exploded nearby.

Masked men impose ban on "indecent" CDs, alcohol, narcotics in Fallujah. (AFP)

Masked Islamic fighters sought to impose bans on sales of "indecent" compact discs, alcohol and narcotics in Fallujah. "We the Mudjahedeen forbid you from selling alcohol, indecent CDs and narcotic-based drugs," proclaimed a group calling itself the "Fallujah Mudjahedeen" in posters pasted onto walls on May 20. The fliers warned residents that they had a 48-hour grace period before the ban would be enforced. On May 22, masked men carrying weapons toured the town, where scores of US soldiers died in fierce fighting last month, for evidence that their orders were being observed. Armed men also barged into clinics looking for narcotic-based drugs and told owners that they would return and punish those who refused to obey their orders, employees at various clinics said.

Girl injured in grenade blast at police facility in Samawah. (Kyodo News)

A girl was slightly injured in a bomb attack against a police facility in Samawah, where Japanese ground troops are operating on humanitarian and reconstruction missions, local police said. A grenade exploded on the road in front of the facility at around 10 p.m., leaving the girl, who lives nearby, with a minor injury, they said. The attackers fled immediately. Iraqi security authorities seized the facility May 15 after armed supporters of militant Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, using the facility as a base, exchanged gunfire with Iraqi police authorities and Dutch troops May 14-15, the police said.

May 23

Iraqi policeman killed, two others wounded in western Basra. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi policeman was killed and two others were wounded when an explosive charge went off near their patrol on Al-Zubayr road in western Basra.

US battles militia in two cities. (BBC)

There has been an upsurge in fighting between US-led coalition forces and Shia militia in the Iraqi holy city of Najaf and nearby Kufa. The US military said 32 fighters loyal to radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr were killed in a battle in the compound of a Kufa mosque. Officials at a hospital in the city said 14 Iraqis were killed in the attack.

Iraqis lose right to sue troops over war crimes, military win immunity pledge in deal on UN vote. (UK newspaper *The Observer*)

British and American troops are to be granted immunity from prosecution in Iraq after the crucial 30 June handover, undermining claims that the new Iraqi government will have 'full sovereignty' over the state. They will only be subject to the domestic law of their home countries. Military sources said that the question of immunity was central to obtaining agreement from the military on a new United Nations resolution on Iraq, to be published by the middle of June. Order 17 refers to an agreement signed by the Coalition Provisional Authority giving American and British troops protection. That will now be extended to the new multi-national force made up of British and American forces which will remain in Iraq at the invitation of the interim government.

May 24

Three persons beaten up in Fallujah for selling liquors. (Turkish Anatolian News Agency)

It was reported that three persons were beaten up and forced to walk in the streets naked in Fallujah. The armed militia beat up their prisoners in a public event, watched by the police. It was reported that the three victims were later detained by the police.

Four killed in blast near coalition HQ in Baghdad. (Xinhua News Agency)

Four people were killed when a car blew up near an entrance to the "Green Zone" compound in Baghdad where the US-led coalition forces is based, US military said.

May 25

Assassination attempt against police chief kills in Al-Khalis. (AFP)

The Iraqi police chief in the town of Al-Khalis near Baqubah was seriously injured in an assassination attempt that killed one and wounded two others. General Ali Hussein's car was reportedly attacked by unidentified assailants as he was driving to work in Khalis. The police chief suffered serious injuries to his face and neck. His driver was killed and two companions, including his son, wounded.

May 26

Top al-Sadr aide seized in war-torn Najaf. (BBC)

US troops have seized a brother-in-law of radical Iraqi cleric Moqtada Sadr in Najaf, where fighting in the cemetery has reportedly left dozens dead. Iraqi sources said Sayyed Ryad al-Nuri, a close aide to the Mahdi Army's leader, was taken without a fight during raids in the city. But a battle raged through the night in Najaf's vast cemetery, with US sources reporting about 50 gunmen killed. In Baghdad, some 20 of Sadr's armed followers are also said to have died.

Two Russians killed, five wounded, remaining staff to be pulled out of Iraq. (Russia TV)

Two Russians have been killed in an attack in Baghdad. They were working there on a contract with a Russian company involved in restoring the Iraqi energy system. Two Iraqis have been killed as well.

Two Iraqis killed, six wounded in Baghdad bomb blast. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

Two Iraqis were killed and six others, including two policemen, were wounded in a bomb explosion on Qasr al-Nada Street in Al-Bayya'i neighbourhood in southern Baghdad.

Seven injured during university brawl in Basra. (AFP)

Seven people were injured in a brawl over a woman between rival groups of male students at Basra University, hospital and police sources said. Four police officers were among those hurt, two of them seriously, during the fight between students from the southern cities of Nasiriyah and Basra. The students held some police officers hostage during the fight.

Palestinians leave desert camp for Baghdad. (UNHCR)

Scores of Palestinians have left a camp in eastern Jordan in recent days, opting to return to the frequent bombings and tension in Baghdad. The Palestinians were among more than 1,500 people who have been living in camps assisted by the UN refugee agency in eastern Jordan's desert. UNHCR is not promoting returns to Iraq, and advised the Palestinians about the current insecurity and other challenges facing people in the country. Despite these warnings, the dozens who have so far left said they preferred to try their luck back in the Iraqi capital rather than stay in the dusty camps. After the group informed UNHCR that they wanted to go back, the agency provided financial assistance to cover their travel expenses and several months' rent, along with other relief items. In 2003, the UN refugee agency undertook a registration campaign of Palestinians in Baghdad. It counted some 23,000 Palestinian refugees, but the total number is estimated at between 35,000 and 42,000.

May 27

One Iraqi killed in Baghdad clash. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

An Iraqi was killed and seven others were wounded during an exchange of gunfire between unidentified armed men and US soldiers in Baghdad. Eyewitnesses said that six of the wounded were on a bus when they became caught in the cross-fire. They added that the clash took place after an explosive charge which targeted a US convoy went off.

Three Iraqis killed, nine wounded in mortar fire in Samarra. (AFP)

It was reported that a man and two of his children were killed and nine other people were wounded when a mortar round exploded in Samarra. Kassem Rahil Matar, 30, his seven-year-old daughter Aiman and his five-year-old son Lais were killed when a shell exploded in their home. Several mortar rounds were fired into various neighbourhoods of Samarra.

Iraqi Governing Council member reportedly escapes assassination attempt. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

It was reported that three of the bodyguards of Salamah al-Khafaji, member of Iraq's Interim Governing Council [IGC], and one of her companions were killed when she was targeted by an assassination attempt during her return from Al-Najaf.

Shia cleric cuts deal to end Najaf stand-off. (UK newspaper *Financial Times*)

Shia Muslim members of the Governing Council in Baghdad said they had reached an agreement with Moqtada al-Sadr, the Shia cleric, to end a bloody two-month stand-off in Iraq's Shia holy city of Najaf. The tentative deal falls far short of the demands of the US-led coalition, which is seeking Sadr's unconditional surrender to face murder charges. It also will set the stage for the conflict with Sadr to be finally resolved by Iraq's interim government which takes office on June 30. According to the agreement, US forces fighting Sadr's Jaysh al-Mahdi militia in the southern holy cities of Najaf and nearby Kufa will withdraw to bases outside the city, with a small force remaining to protect the governorate building. In return, Sadr must disperse his militiamen, most of whom come from Baghdad, and close courts which his followers have opened to dispense his interpretation of Islamic justice. He must also engage "in a broad discussion" about the future of his militia and outstanding charges against him with "the Shia House", a grouping of Shia members of the US-appointed Governing Council.

Coalition responds to Najaf truce. (BBC)

The US-led coalition is suspending offensive operations in the Iraq holy city of Najaf, after radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr offered a truce. Sadr offered to withdraw his men if the US also pulled back and shelved a murder inquiry against him.

May 28

Body of Iraqi council member's son found in river. (Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV)

Iraqi Interior Minister Samir al-Sumaydi'i has said that the body of the son of Salamah al-Khafaji, member of the Iraqi Governing Council [IGC], has been recovered from the river in Al-Yusufiyah area. Al-Khafaji said that her son was probably kidnapped by the attackers who tried to assassinate her in the same area on May 27.

May 29

Gunmen kill Kurd politician and family in Kirkuk. (Reuters)

Gunmen killed a prominent Kurdish politician and members of his family in a drive-by shooting in the northern Iraq city of Kirkuk, police said. Colonel Mohammed Hamid, the head of Kirkuk's fire department as well as a senior member of the

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan party, was travelling with his wife, sister and another relative when his car came under attack. Police said Hamid and his three companions were killed, while his drive was seriously wounded.

Iraq news editor's driver and bodyguard abducted, killed. (AP)

The former Iraqi editor of a U.S.-funded newspaper said his driver and bodyguard were abducted and murdered, hours after police warned him of a possible kidnapping plot. Ismael Zayer was the editor-in-chief of the Coalition Provisional Authority-backed newspaper *Al-Sabah* until May 3, when he quit to set up his own publication. After the police warning, Zayer said he stayed in his home for about 20 minutes and then left his home to find that his driver and bodyguard disappeared. Iraqi police later found their bodies in Baghdad's Raghiba Khatoon area.

Driver, bodyguard of Dutch journalists killed in Iraq. (Radio Netherlands)

The driver and the bodyguard of two Dutch journalists have been murdered in Iraq. Their bodies were found after they were abducted the previous day.

May 30

Two Sabaeen goldsmiths kidnapped. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Dustur*)

Two Sabaeen goldsmiths were kidnapped by unidentified gunmen last week. It was reported that a number of goldsmiths and members of their families have been taken hostage recently for ransom.

Classes in Di Qar University suspended due to threats. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Mada*)

It was reported that classes at Di Qar University were suspended. The University decided to suspend the classes because of the threats against the professors of this university. The report adds that the professors received threats signed by a group called "Nasrat al-Mazlum". The report cites the University head as saying that classes will be suspended until the situation improves.

Fighting flares in Najaf. (BBC)

Shooting has broken out in the Iraqi holy city of Najaf where gunmen loyal to Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr agreed a truce with US forces. A battle began when US jeeps approached the city's vast cemetery and Mehdi Army fighters drove them back with rockets, a spokesman for Mr Sadr said. Hospital sources said four Iraqis had been wounded in the clash.

Sunni politician killed in Mahmoudiya. (RFE/RL *Iraq Report*)

Four gunmen opened fire on the vehicle of Iraqi Islamic Party deputy head Qahdan Kazim al-Rubay'i as he was driving home, killing al-Rubay'i in the latest attack seemingly targeting Iraqi parties and individuals participating in the Iraqi Governing Council. Al-Rubay'i was responsible for media relations for the party, which is one of the largest Sunni Muslim parties in Iraq and is represented on the Governing Council. The attack occurred in Mahmudiyah, about 30 kilometers south of Baghdad. Locals reportedly captured one suspect and turned him over to the Iraqi Islamic Party's headquarters, while three others suspects escaped.

May 31

At least four killed, score wounded in Baghdad car bomb. (AFP)

At least four people, including a woman, were reportedly killed and more than 20 wounded when at least one car bomb exploded in a western Baghdad neighbourhood. The blast happened on Kindi street in front of a house belonging to Naim Haddad, a former senior Baath official from Saddam Hussein's regime. The house of the former Baath official, who was slightly wounded in the leg, was completely devastated by the blast. His wife and three children were also wounded in the explosion.

Iraqi police shut down Chalabi's office in Ramadi. (AFP)

Iraqi police shut the office of national politician Ahmad Chalabi in the town of Ramadi, the Iraqi National Congress (INC) said.

Lebanon moves Iraqi Kurds to buffer zone. (AP)

Lebanon moved 30 Kurdish asylum-seekers into the buffer zone along the border with Israel, a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping force said. The spokesman for the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said the Kurds had voluntarily chosen to be relocated to a spot between a Lebanese security checkpoint and a UNIFIL position at the Israeli border crossing at Ras Naquora. In October 2003, UNHCR repatriated 16 of the Kurds to Iraq following the overthrow of Saddam Hussain by the U.S.-led coalition forces. The remaining 30 insisted on being resettled in a third country.

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