

## **Chronology of Events in Iraq, September 2003\***

### **September 1**

#### **Iraqi interim Governing Council names new cabinet. (Agence France-Presse / AFP)**

Iraq's Governing Council announced the names of the 24 men and one woman who will act as ministers in an interim government until elections are held. The new cabinet is divided up among the country's various communities, with 13 ministries going to Muslim Shiites, five to Sunnis, five to Kurds, one to Turkmen and one to the Christians. The key oil ministry goes to Shiite Ibrahim Mohammad Bahr al-Ulum, and the interior minister post will be held by another Shiite, Nuri Badran. The foreign affairs portfolio will go to a Kurd, Hoshiar al-Zibari, while finance goes to a Sunni, Kamel al-Kailani. One ministerial post will go to a woman, Nisrin Mustafa Burwari. The new interim government will not have defence and intelligence ministries.

#### **Two Iraqis killed in assault on Ba'athist-owned house in Najaf. (AFP)**

Two people were killed in an assault on a house owned by an official of the banned Ba'ath party in Najaf. A police officer said that "at 5:00 am, police and members of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) launched an assault on the house of a Ba'ath party official, Karim Ghaith, in Ishtiraki, in the south of the city". There was reportedly an exchange of gunfire and two of the assailants were killed, and the Ba'ath party official escaped. The assailants burnt the house."

**Al-Jazeera satellite TV report on the same news:** The SCIRI's Badr Corps arrested Karim Ghayth al-Da'ni, secretary of the Ba'th Party branch in Al-Najaf and Al-Kufah. The arrest followed clashes with Al-Da'ni and his brother in Al-Hay al-Ishtiraki area in Al-Najaf. Even lower level members of the Ba'th party are now pursued, not necessarily the senior staff, who are on the US cards of the 55 most wanted.

#### **Police chief of Kufah wounded in attack. (AFP)**

The police chief of Kufah, Karim Abded Attiyah, was shot in the right arm at about 1:00 am as he drove through a checkpoint at the entrance to the holy city Najaf. He reportedly did not stop at a roadblock built by members of a political faction at the entrance to Najaf and they opened fire. He was wounded and taken to Najaf hospital, according to the police.

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## **September 2**

### **Substantial number of UN staff to be temporarily removed from Iraq. (UN News Service)**

The United Nations has decided to temporarily remove a substantial number of international staff from Iraq while security issues are examined on the ground following the attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad in August which killed 22 people and injured scores more, a spokesman said. The UN's core humanitarian functions would continue with senior international staff remaining as well as a heavy reliance on local Iraqi staff, spokesman Fred Eckhard said. Other staff would be moved to neighbouring countries. The decision was made on August 30.

### **Blast hits Baghdad police HQ. (British Broadcasting Corporation / BBC)**

A suspected car bomb has exploded outside the police headquarters in the Iraqi capital Baghdad, injuring around 14 people. The building houses the office of US-appointed Baghdad police chief Hassan Ali, who was not there at the time, and is next to the interior ministry and police academy. It has also been disclosed that two US military police officers were killed and one wounded when their vehicle hit an explosive device on a road in southern Baghdad.

### **Iraqi police holding 25 in Mosque bombing. (Associated Press / AP)**

A senior Najaf police official said nine suspects with alleged links to al-Qaida had been arrested on suspicion of direct involvement in the car bombing at the Imam Ali mosque. The official said the nine included two Saudis and a Palestinian carrying a Jordanian passport. The rest were Iraqis, he said. He said the al-Qaida links had been determined through interrogation of the captives. The official said one of the men was carrying a message that read: "The pig has been killed," an apparent reference to Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim. Estimates of the total number of dead range from more than 80 to more than 120. U.S. Marine Maj. Rick Hall said in Najaf that 125 people died and 142 were injured. Al-Hakim was given a martyr's burial in Najaf on September 2 with an estimated 400,000 Shiite faithful attending the funeral ceremony. The police official said several of the men captured had been carrying bi-directional satellite pagers through which they were able to communicate both inside Iraq and possibly to nearby countries. The bomb was placed in one car, stolen from an Iraqi government agency, which was parked overnight before being detonated remotely as al-Hakim left the mosque at the end of Friday prayers, the official said. He also said seven senior members of Ba'ath Party, who had not been bothered after the country fell to U.S. forces April 9, had been arrested since the bombing. The official said it was not known if those arrests were directly linked to the mosque attack. He said the suspects who "admitted" links to al-Qaida told police they had plans to target oil pipelines, electrical and water utilities and other political and religious leaders.

## September 3

### **US troops move to disarm Moqtada Sadr's guard. (AFP)**

US troops moved to disarm the volunteer guard of anti-US firebrand Moqtada Sadr but were thrice rebuffed, a spokesman for the Shiite Muslim cleric said. The volunteers, armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles and pistols, have been guarding Sadr's Najaf base since the assassination of prominent Shiite leader Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer al-Hakim in a massive car bombing. "Americans came up to Sadr's house in three armoured cars and demanded that the special guard hand over its weapons but they refused," spokesman Qais al-Khazali said. "We believe that there is no role in the new Iraq for organized militias," US civil administrator Paul Bremer told a news conference on September 2, adding that the US-led coalition was nonetheless willing to provide weapons and uniforms for a special police force to protect the Shiite holy places. On August 31, Sadr's guards killed two people and seriously injured two more when they opened fire on a car passing the front of his house late at night.

### **Three suspected Ansar members arrested with explosives in Iraq. (AFP)**

The Kurdish security forces of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) arrested three persons suspected of belonging to Ansar al-Islam with three suitcases packed with TNT. It was reported that the PUK forces arrested two men near the entrance of the Northern Oil Company with two suitcases, and the third was seized at the Kirkuk market, in northern Iraq.

### **Shiite Badr Brigade rearmed. (AP)**

The brother of slain Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim said Shiites in Iraq would not take up arms against the U.S.-led occupation force, but suggested his Badr Brigade had been rearmed - in defiance of American orders. Abel-Aziz al-Hakim is a member of the U.S.-picked Governing Council and his brother's successor as chief of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). "If the allied forces are unable to take actions against such crimes, we will defend ourselves," al-Hakim said. When asked if the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of SCIRI which he established during Iranian exile, was back in service, Al-Hakim said: "The Badr Brigade is more and more organized and will defend Iraqi interests and will share in the rebuilding of Iraq." "We will continue to work with the Governing Council. We will continue rebuilding Iraq. We will continue to establish justice and a new independent Iraq," al-Hakim said. He also called for "an end to the occupation of Iraq and for Iraq to gain independence as soon as possible."

### **Kirkuk political parties agree on armed guards. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Khabat*)**

In the presence of the Kirkuk governor, his deputy and assistants, the head and members of the city's administration council and the deputy commander of the coalition forces, the Kirkuk Governorate Office held a meeting with the political parties, which are present in Kirkuk. The aim of the meeting was to find a mechanism of informing the political parties and sides inside the city of Kirkuk about the advancement of the work of the government institutions and civil administration in Kirkuk. It was decided in the meeting that only three people from each political party

can attend the city's administration council's meetings, but without having the right to vote or participate in the debate. The aim, of this arrangement is to remain informed about any change, which may occur within the city's administration council and Kirkuk Governorate. It was also clarified that in order to protect the offices of the political parties, five of the guards of each office can be armed.

#### **September 4**

##### **Resignation of Kurdish Islamist media official. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Kurdistani Nuwe*)**

Kamil Mahmud, the deputy official in charge of information and the media centre of the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan (IMIK) and chief editor of “Buzutnaway Islami” newspaper, announced his resignation. He pointed out that after his decision to resign he would not allow the movement to keep his name on the newspaper as chief editor.

##### **Committee for eradicating traces of the Ba'ath Party expels 553 former Ba'athists from state institutions in Kirkuk. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Khabat*)**

The committee for eradicating traces of the Ba'ath Party in Kirkuk has expelled 546 former civil servants from the Directorate of Education and seven others from the Civil Defence department in Kirkuk. The deputy governor of Kirkuk and the head of the committee, Irfan Kirkuki, said that the process of cleaning state institutions of former Ba'athists is being carried out in cooperation with the coalition forces in accordance with a decision issued by US chief administrator Paul Bremer's office. He added: "The decision divides the former Ba'athists into four categories, from active members to branch members." Irfan Kirkuki said that so far nearly 1,000 former civil servants have been expelled from institutions all over Kirkuk.

##### **British mine-clearing expert shot dead by gunmen in Iraq. (UK newspaper *The Times*)**

A British civilian working for a mine disposal charity was killed in a roadside ambush near Mosul in northern Iraq. Gunmen opened fire on Ian Rimell, 53, who was working for the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), as he was returning from a day in the field. His bodyguard, Salem Ahmed Mohammed, is in a critical condition. MAG said that no group had claimed responsibility for the attack on the pair's clearly marked vehicle.

#### **September 5**

##### **Unidentified men attack Baghdad mosque, wound three. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)**

Unidentified armed men attacked a mosque in Al-Sha'b City in Baghdad with automatic guns, wounding three people, one of them seriously. Eyewitnesses said that armed men attacked the Qiba Mosque in Al-Sha'b city after dawn prayers and opened fire on worshippers. Citizens rushed the wounded to hospital.

### **Iraqi youth accidentally killed by US troops. (AFP)**

A 13-year-old youth, Omar Saad Jassem, was accidentally killed after American troops opened fire and missed their target, his father said. He was reportedly killed while an American unit was chasing and opening fire on an individual who was riding a motorbike, and fatally wounded Omar who was nearby.

### **Iraqi Islamist group announces expansion of operations to whole country. (London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat*)**

The Ansar al-Islam group (Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan, SIK) has asserted that it has resumed its activities in Iraq after being forced "to slip into neighbouring countries" as a result of the US strikes that targeted it at the start of the war to topple Saddam Hussain's regime. Abu-Abdallah al-Shafi'i, the group's "Emir" [leader], said in a statement that his organization has expanded its operations from Iraqi Kurdistan to include all of Iraq and is reorganizing its ranks. He hinted that the group might change its name in light of the parties which might join it or which the group joins. In his statement, Al-Shafi'i launched a violent attack on Jalal Talabani, Secretary-General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), whose forces had fought battles with Ansar al-Islam. He said the US forces "were unable to harm us" despite the help they got from what he called "the renegades in the region and the Islamic Group's betrayal", a reference to the failure of the Islamic Group (Komal-e Islami), which is led by Ali Babayir, to support the SIK during the US attacks on the latter's positions. The statement added that the "Ansar al-Islam" fighters succeeded in slipping into neighbouring countries", and said the concerned countries sought to hand them over to Talabani's PUK but these fighters were able to return to Iraq "where we joined our brothers who are a normal extension of us." It announced that the SIK fighters carried out "qualitative operations, including the martyrdom operation carried out by Yasin al-Bahr Unit". But it did not specify the nature of this operation or give details of other operations, which it claimed the group had carried out. The group announced in February 2003 that it had removed its leader Mullah Krekar because of statements it said were inconsistent with its ideology. His lawyer said that his client "denies having any connections with Ansar al-Islam or the Baghdad bombing" of the UN headquarters. He added that this group consists of "several factions and some of them are more extremist and hard line than the others.

## **September 6**

### **Son of Iraqi ex-diplomat indicted in the US. (US newspaper *The New York Times*)**

Wisam Numan al-Anbuge, the son of a former Iraqi diplomat in New York has been indicted on charges of aiding Iraqi intelligence officials in locating Iraqi dissidents in the U.S. that were hostile to the Ba'ath party regime. His older brother, Raed, was charged in April 2003 with failing to register with the U.S. Justice Department as a foreign agent after it was discovered that he had been working for Iraqi intelligence since January 2001. The elder brother had met with Iraqi intelligence officers posted to the Iraqi mission in New York City and had identified dissidents for them. According to the Wisam al-Anbuge indictment, the younger brother was charged after it was discovered that he provided Iraqi intelligence officials with information on the location of two dissidents in 2001. Both men pled "not guilty" to the charges.

## **September 7**

### **Two Iraqi children die in street gunbattle in Falluja. (Reuters)**

Two children were killed in fighting between Iraqi police and thieves northwest of Baghdad, witnesses said. They said an 11-year-old boy and a nine-year-old girl were killed while walking in the main street of Falluja, when police and a group of thieves exchanged fire. There were no casualties among the police or the thieves, the witnesses said. Police arrested two suspects and charged them with looting cars and banks in Falluja and Baghdad.

### **Headquarters of Shiite Al-Dawa party comes under attack in Basra. (AFP)**

The main headquarters of the Shiite Islamic Al-Dawa party in Basra was targeted in two automatic gunfire attacks, but no one was wounded, the party said. According to Jabbar Latif, a member of the party's political branch, "two men armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles circulated in a car and at 8:00 am opened fire on the main headquarters before coming back three hours later and firing again. "Guards in front of the headquarters successfully pursued the car and arrested one of the assailants while the other escaped," he said, adding that an investigation will be carried out to determine which group the assailants may belong to. After the attack, a dozen armed party militants set up a roadblock near the Iraqi police, in view of British soldiers aboard a military vehicle positioned in the area. Latif said the detained man will be handed over to Iraqi police after interrogation.

### **US sets deadline for militias to disarm. (AFP)**

The US-led coalition has set a deadline for the disarmament of militias that have taken to the streets of central Iraq since the August car bombing in the holy city of Najaf, a US military spokesman said. He said that after September 13, the coalition forces will take their arms away and, if they resist, they will be arrested. The coalition asked the Iraqi interim governing council to appeal to the various militia groups running Najaf to disarm voluntarily before the deadline. US officials have reportedly permitted some militiamen to operate as a protection force for holy Shiite shrines in Najaf since the August 29 bombing. But alongside the sanctioned protection force, the militiamen of other groups have been mounting checkpoints and armed patrols in Najaf and nearby Kufah, sparking the possibility of a showdown with US occupation forces. US marines have maintained a discreet presence around Najaf. It was stated that, after the deadline, the job of disarming the militiamen would fall in the first instance to the Iraqi police. US official said the disarmament deadline applied not only to the militia of Moqtada Sadr, but also to the Badr brigade. It also applied to any one else carrying weapons in public without a coalition licence in defiance of the arms controls introduced in June. He said that after the deadline, the only people who would be allowed to bear arms on the streets would be those uniformed groups specifically authorised by the coalition. These include a new 400-strong protection force for Najaf's main shrine, the tomb of Imam Ali, that was inaugurated on September 2. All of its members have been approved by the coalition and the Najaf authorities, and been given several weeks of training by Iraqi police and coalition instructors. It was eventually intended to expand its strength to 2,000 personnel.

**Agence France-Presse report on the same news on September 13:** US commanders and Shiite Muslim leaders in al-Najaf reported success in averting a

showdown between Iraqi militias and the occupying forces determined to disarm them. A US Marine officer said the streets of Najaf were "back to normal" after a US ultimatum to the militias, while a senior Shiite leader expressed optimism that a deal was at hand over the shape of an authorized protection force. A US official said 14 weapons were confiscated in the city, and only one person refused to cooperate and was arrested. Supporters of Moqtada Sadr, who has been recruiting soldiers for his Mehdi Army militia, had threatened to defy the Americans, triggering a round of talks in search of a compromise. "We have almost reached a solution, but not a definitive solution," said Sheikh Sadreddin Kubbanji, head of the Najaf office of Hakim's Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). A plan under discussion would limit the number of armed men authorised to perform security duties in Najaf, protecting religious shrines and top Shiite clerics.

**Demonstration in Kirkuk demands release of arrested tribal chief. (AFP)**

Some 5,000 people demonstrated in the city of Kirkuk to demand the release of Sheikh Hatam al-Assy al-Obeidi, the head of a powerful tribe arrested by US troops on suspicion of abetting sabotage of fuel pipelines in August. The protesters also called for the departure of the city's Kurdish governor, Abderrahman Zangana, and for new elections. "Kirkuk is a city for all Iraqis and not only the Kurds," they cried. Members of Obeidi's tribe, supporters of Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr and Turkomans participated in the demonstration. US forces arrested Obeidi on August 30 along with seven of his clansmen in his home where they also found arms and four million Iraqi dinars (around 2,700 dollars). According to a tribal source, those arrested are "accused of supporting terrorism and breaking a deal signed with the Americans to guarantee the protection of eight oil pipelines and three power cables between Kirkuk and Tikrit."

**CD shop blast in Hilla. (Iraqi Communist Party newspaper *Tariq al-Sha'b*)**

An armed group exploded a CD shop in Al-Askari District in Hillah. The explosion caused great damage to nearby houses and killed five youths who were waiting near a grocery shop for a taxi to go to work.

**Tunisian families appeal for help to return to their country. (*Tariq al-Sha'b*)**

In a letter on behalf of some Tunisian families, Layla Fadili Iskandar addressed the Governing Council in an open letter, requesting help for repatriation to Tunisia. The families complained that a group was threatening Tunisian to leave the country.

**September 8**

**Fourteen Iraqi political parties form alliance, Unified Iraqi Front. (London-based *Al-Zaman* newspaper and Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty RFE/RL Iraq Report)**

Fourteen Iraqi political parties and movements have formed an alliance called the Unified Iraqi Front. Faysal Sharhan al-Urs was named as honorary chairman of the grouping. The alliance's charter calls for all political parties and forces to work towards Iraq's sovereignty and independence, to restore its pan-Arab and international role, and to promote democracy. The alliance's members include the Democratic

Constitution Party, the Movement for Building Iraq's Future, the Free Speech Party, the Islamic Iraq Movement, the Liberal Independents Movement, the Unified Nasirite Pan-Arabist Party, the Iraqi Republican Party, the New Iraq Party, the Islamic Revolution Party, the Iraqi National Bloc, the Common Destiny Party, the Independent Progressive National Movement, and the Islamic Accord Movement.

**U.S. troops raid homes of Saddam loyalists in Tikrit, arrest at least four. (AP)**

More than 100 U.S. troops stormed homes in Saddam Hussain's hometown Tikrit, searching for Saddam loyalists accused of financing or coordinating attacks on American soldiers. Four wanted men were arrested, the military said. Acting on tips from Iraqis detained in previous raids as well as intelligence sources, the troops raided the houses in downtown Tikrit almost simultaneously, catching the men asleep. The detainees included cell leaders of Saddam Fedayeen guerrillas, who have fired rocket-propelled grenades on American patrols and rigged the roads of Tikrit with homemade bombs that have killed or wounded dozens of soldiers, U.S. military officials said. Their identities were not disclosed, in line with military rules. The detainees were loaded on a truck, blindfolded and with their hands tied with plastic zipcuffs. In the distance, suspected guerrillas fired mortar rounds, a regular occurrence in Tikrit. Most of them hit empty fields close to U.S. positions, and rarely cause damage or injuries.

**Shi'a authority Al-Najafi escapes assassination attempt. (AL-Jazeera satellite TV)**

It was reported that the Shi'a authority Bashir al-Najafi escaped an assassination attempt carried out by unidentified gunmen. A source from the Al-Najaf Police Force said that the house of the religious authority came under attack with light weapons and hand grenades. One of the attackers was arrested in Al-Najaf after he was wounded. Two of the Shi'a authority's bodyguards and a citizen were seriously wounded. The religious authority's house sustained some damage.

**Iraqi ex-intelligence operative arrested in connection with Najaf blast. (AFP)**

A former Iraqi intelligence agent was arrested in Najaf on suspicion of involvement in the recent car bombing which killed at least 83 people in the Shiite holy city, a member of the local police said. A merchant from Najaf informed on the man, whose job under the ousted regime of Saddam Hussain was to write reports about Iraqi dissidents in Syria, the police official said.

**September 9**

**Iraqi tribal leader arrested on suspicion of sheltering Saddam. (AFP)**

A tribal leader in southern Iraq under British army control has been arrested on suspicion of sheltering ousted president Saddam Hussain, members of the tribe said. Sabah al-Maliki, who heads the Bani Malek tribe, was taken from his home in the Qorna district, 80 kilometres north of Basra, said Majed al-Maliki. British troops backed by helicopters searched the tribal leader's residence and took away certain objects and some money, according to Majed al-Maliki. About 100 Bani Maliki men demonstrated outside British forces' headquarters in Basra demanding the chieftain be



freed. "British officers promised to free him today. If they don't keep their promise we will no longer use peaceful means. We will ask members of the tribe to pull out from the security forces and stop all cooperation with the coalition," warned Majed al-Maliki.

#### **Car bomb reportedly kills one person and wounds several in Arbil. (AFP)**

One Iraqi was killed and 53 people wounded, in a suspected car bomb blast in the Kurdish city of Arbil, a US military spokeswoman said. The explosion was set off near a checkpoint of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) of Massoud Barzani.

### **September 11**

#### **US holding Iranian Mujahideen in Iraq. (Reuters)**

The U.S. military said that it is holding some 3,800 Iranian rebel detainees in eastern Iraq and denied that the Mujahedin Khalq Organization (PMOI) is still launching cross-border raids into Iran. "Are they continuing to enter Iran? I can guarantee you that is not happening. They are contained," a commander of U.S. troops in Iraq said.

### **September 12**

#### **Former Ba'ath party member gunned down in broad daylight. (Channelnewsasia)**

An Iraqi man believed to be a former Ba'ath party member was murdered in broad daylight in Baghdad. Subhi Sattam Guood was getting out of a minibus when two men in a car shot him with a pistol. The victim's nephew said Subhi was killed because he was a member of the former ruling Ba'ath party. The policeman leading the investigation said the murder was "just a revenge incident", not a robbery.

#### **Unknown group attack military hospital in Fallujah. (Jordanian news agency Petra)**

Jordan's Information Minister Nabil al-Sharif said that the Jordanian mobile military hospital operating in Al-Fallujah in Iraq came under fire from an unknown group at dawn. The group stormed the hospital and clashed with the Jordanian protection force. The clash resulted in the killing of Umar Ahmad Arif and the injury of four members of the protection force and one of the Iraqi workers at the hospital.

**Agence France Presse report on the same news:** US troops killed 10 Iraqi security men and a Jordanian bodyguard in Fallujah. Five Iraqi police and at least five administrative staff at a Jordanian Red Crescent hospital, four of them Jordanians, were also wounded in the shooting that left the clinic pockmarked by bullets and shells, police and officials said. But 15 hours after the 00:45 am incident, the US military issued an "initial report" confirming that just one US soldier and five "neutrals" had been wounded in what a spokesperson described as a "small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) attack". The dead Iraqis were all members of the auxiliary Fallujah Protection Force, district police chief Qahtan Adnan Hamad said. A security officer at the hospital, just across a highway from a major US base, said the shooting had continued for a full three hours. The 15 Iraqi security men had given

chase in two vehicles after gunmen in a BMW opened fire on the governor's office in the centre of Fallujah shortly after midnight, district patrol chief Lieutenant Colonel Jalal Sabri said. When they reached the Jordanian hospital to the north of the town, they ran into US soldiers who opened fire on them, he said. Dr. Dhia Jumaili said that US troops prevented ambulances from reaching the injured for some time after the shooting. Angry crowds of residents gathered outside both the governor's office and police headquarters to protest against the deaths. Relatives of the dead Iraqi security men joined the demonstrators to demand the return of their loved ones, whose bodies remained in US hands.

**AP report on the same news on September 13:** The U.S. military offered condolences to the families of those mistakenly killed during shooting in Fallujah, saying it was aware of "at least one death." Iraqi police said eight of their officers and a Jordanian security guard were killed. Tribal leaders and Fallujah dignitaries issued a statement, distributed in mosques, calling for a one-day general strike and a three-day period of mourning to begin the same day for the deceased.

### **September 13**

#### **Turkman conference inaugurated in Kirkuk. (Turkish Anatolian News Agency)**

Turkman conference was inaugurated at Kirkuk Theatre Hall. The conference started with speeches by Rashid Mandan, Iraqi Science and Technology Minister, and Abd al-Rahman Moustapha, Governor of Kirkuk.

**Turkish TRT 2 television report on the same news on September 16:** Faruq Abdallah Abd-al-Rahman, the newly elected chairman of the Iraqi Turkoman Front (ITC), said that they will engage in a favourable dialogue with all the sectors of the country for the territorial integrity and stability of Iraq.

#### **Anti-coalition rallies take place in Abu-Ghurayb and Nasiriyah. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)**

Dozens of the inhabitants of Abu-Ghurayb, west of Baghdad, have staged a demonstration in protest against the shooting dead of a number of Iraqis in the area by US occupation troops. The demonstrators denounced the policy of the occupation troops. The demonstration was accompanied by tight security measures imposed by US troops on the region, which witnessed several attacks against those troops recently.

In Al-Nasiriyah, southern Iraq, angry protesters burned a vehicle of the Italian troops and another of the Iraqi police. They set tyres on fire and smashed the windows of the Al-Nasiriyah police directorate building, demanding that they be returned to their jobs. Eyewitnesses said the confrontations killed one demonstrator and injured another. Meanwhile, the Italian troops encircled the area.

#### **Turkey, USA agree action plan on Turkish armed groups in northern Iraq. (Turkish NTV television)**

The Turkish and US delegations reached an agreement over an action plan aimed at purging northern Iraq of the PKK-Kadek [Kurdistan Workers' Party - Congress for Freedom and Democracy in Kurdistan] organization. The plan incorporates a series of

measures ranging from weekly evaluations of the Rehabilitation Law to the conditions of possible future operations against the PKK. Under the plan, within a certain time frame the sides are to submit to one another their proposals regarding the kinds of operations that could be undertaken and the conditions under which such operations may be launched against the PKK-Kadek camps in northern Iraq. These proposals will also include conditions of when to fire at the militants, and where they will be held after being arrested. At this stage, the sides will conduct an intense exchange of intelligence information on the PKK-Kadek camps and its activities in northern Iraq. According to the plan, Kurdish Democratic Party leader Barzani and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan leader Talabani's groups will also convey the message to the organization, via various channels, that they would benefit from the rehabilitation law.

## **September 14**

### **Najaf police chief arrested on corruption charges. (AFP)**

The director of police in the city of Najaf has been arrested on corruption charges and has spent the past two days in prison, the city's governor said. Haidar Mahdi al-Mayali said Brigadier General Hussein Yassine al-Jabburi was arrested and would be put on trial for corruption, which included taking bribes. Police sources said the decision to remove Jabburi from the post was taken by Iraq's Interior Ministry. Residents in Najaf also claimed Jabburi was a member of the Ba'ath Party and officials had failed to remove him from power after US forces ended major combat operations on May 1.

### **UN stops repatriation of Iraqi refugees from Iran. (Iranian news agency IRNA).**

Based on decisions adopted by UNHCR, repatriation of Iraqi nationals living in Iran will not be pursued, an Iranian official said. Director General of the Interior Ministry's Bureau for Alien and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) Ahmad Hoseyni said that any repatriation of Iraqi refugees to their home country is self-motivated and illegal. "Based on an agreement made between Iran and UNHCR, repatriation process which had been expected to be implemented at the end of the Iranian month of Mordad (August) was cancelled due to the explosion in the UN office in Baghdad," he said. He further put the number of Iraqi refugees fleeing to Iran at 202,000, and said that UNHCR has taken no new decision on repatriation of refugees so far.

## **September 15**

### **Al-Khaldiya police chief assassinated by gunmen. (AP)**

Three gunmen, their faces covered with red and white Arab headdresses, assassinated the police chief of the "Sunni Triangle" town of al-Khaldiya in an ambush at a traffic circle on the outskirts of the nearby city of Fallujah. Col. Khedair Mekhalef Ali, 48, the al-Khaldiya police chief, was shot at least 25 times, said his driver, who also was wounded in the attack along with Ali's bodyguard. Bodyguard Fouad Issa, 40, wounded in the shoulder and back and also being treated at the hospital, said police have frequently come under attack because they are seen as being associated with the U.S. occupation force. Ali, a former Iraqi army officer, had been police chief for two months.

### **US appointed delegates elect interim council for Tikrit. (RFE/RL Iraq Report)**

A U.S.-appointed delegation of 120 individuals from the Iraqi city of Tikrit gathered to elect a 30-member city council that will govern an area comprising 1 million Iraqis. The council was immediately criticized by some observers who argued that the participants -- and the leaders they elected -- were vetted by U.S. officers. In addition, a U.S.-appointed governor will retain ultimate decision-making power.

### **September 16**

#### **Iraqi Muslim council denounces US troops' arrest of tribal chief. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)**

The Muslim Ulema Council in Iraq issued a statement denouncing the arrest of Shaykh Mut'ib al-Hadhal, chief of the Al-Inzah tribe in Iraq, and other people from Al-Mukhayb village. The statement said their arrest is a flagrant violation of human rights. The US troops arrested Shaykh Mut'ib and 73 people from Al-Mukhayb village, southwest of Al-Ramadi.

#### **Coalition reveals almost 4,000 extra "security detainees" in Iraq. (AFP)**

US officials said they were holding 10,000 prisoners in Iraq, nearly double the number previously reported, and count among the security cases six inmates claiming to be Americans and two who say they are British. Some 4,400 were classified as security detainees, including around 3,800 who did not previously "fit into any category," said Brigadier General Janis Karpinski. Previous figures given by the US military had put the total number of prisoners at between 5,000 and 5,500. Several hundred third-country nationals were among the prisoners held on security grounds since Iraqi leader Saddam Hussain was overthrown in April by US and British forces, she added. The vast majority of these were captured during the war, she said, while only a "negligible" number had been detained since major combat operations were declared over on May 1. Karpinski defined security detainees as those who have attacked coalition forces or were suspected of involvement in or planning of such attacks.

#### **Interim Iraqi government tightens purge of ex-Ba'athists. (AFP)**

Iraq's US-installed Governing Council has stepped up its purge of former members of the Ba'ath regime, barring all but the lowest ranks of the party from keeping posts in the administration. Entefadh Qanbar, a spokesman for the current Council Chairman Ahmad Chalabi, said that a council committee had decided to tighten up restrictions which until now had applied only to upper-level Ba'athists. The panel moved to exclude any bureaucrat titled as a "branch member" or higher in the party, Qanbar said, referring to the next-to-lowest level in the Ba'ath hierarchy. The decision was effective immediately without exception, he said, adding that Iraqis stripped of their jobs could appeal to the committee for a review of their case. Another resolution adopted by the committee would bar any Ba'ath Party "section member" or higher, or any former government aide under Saddam, from assuming the post of director general of any public body. Qanbar said the decision also affects members of the various security services controlled by the ousted leader, non-Ba'athists who were responsible for crimes under the old regime, and those who looted national treasures.

The spokesman said that the ouster of Saddam on April 9 appeared to have had little impact on many Ba'athists. "After a period of withdrawal just after the fall of Baghdad, the Ba'athists resumed their activities and walk the streets freely without worry," Chalabi's spokesman said.

**Iraqi National Congress weekly newspaper *Al-Mu'tamar's* report on the same news on September 20:** The Higher National Committee for the de-Ba'athification of society has issued two decrees. The first decree dismisses Ba'athists with the rank of division member or above from all public posts of all grades. The second decree bans those mentioned in the first decree, in addition to whoever held the position of general manager or above, district manager or above, or the equivalent positions involving advisers and experts in the former regime, from holding any special position or responsibilities in public posts, civil society institutions, press, or the media or undertaking any political activities.

***Decree Number 1:*** "Based on the decree of the Civil Administration Director number 1 on 15 May 2003, as well as the powers granted by the Governing Council that aim to consolidate security and stability and safeguard the atmosphere of freedoms and democracy in Iraq, the Higher National Committee for de-Ba'athification, in its meeting held on 14 September 2003, has decided the following:

"1. Any civil servant who held the rank of division member or a higher rank in the dissolved Ba'ath Party is hereby dismissed from public posts of all grades and must leave his post immediately. Whoever gives false information to remain in his position will be subject to penalties. The relevant administrative personnel are responsible for implementing this decree. Any exceptions issued prior to this decree are hereby declared null and void.

"2. Individuals dismissed under Paragraph 1 above are entitled to submit appeals to the Higher National Committee for de-Ba'athification, which will examine the applications and make the appropriate decisions.

"3. All ministries and departments that are not related to ministries are hereby instructed to implement this decree, which goes into effect as of this date.

Signed: Ahmad al-Chalabi, Chairman of the Higher National Committee for de-Ba'athification, 14 September 2003"

***Decree Number 2:*** "To serve the supreme national interests, safeguard the national accomplishments, and protect democracy, security, and stability in the country, the Higher National Committee for de-Ba'athification in its meeting held on 14 September 2003 has decided the following:

"The following individuals shall be totally banned from holding special positions or undertaking responsibilities in public posts, political activities, civil society institutions, the press, or the media:

"1. Whoever held the rank of division member or a higher rank in the dissolved Ba'ath Party.

"2. Whoever held the post of general manager or a higher post or district manager or a higher post or their equivalent posts involving advisers and experts under the former regime. Excluded from this ban will be those who left the authority and undertook

political activity in the opposition or those who adopted honourable and positive stances.

“3. Individuals affiliated with the repressive agencies of the authority (Special Security, National Security, Presidential Special Protection, Military Intelligence, Saddam Fedayeen, Public Security, and the Intelligence).

“4. Individuals known and proved to be involved in plundering the country's wealth or participating in the regime's aggressive policies or in committing crimes.

“5. The Higher National Committee for de-Ba'athification will examine exceptional cases and will later make a decision on each one of them separately.

“6. All ministries and pertinent quarters are hereby instructed to implement this decree, which goes into effect as of this date.

“Ahmad al-Chalabi, Chairman of the National Higher Committee for de-Ba'athification, 14 September 2003.”

## **September 17**

### **British forces dismiss Basra police chief. (Iran-based Shi'a radio station Voice of the Mujahidin)**

The British occupation authorities have fired Basra Police Chief Khudayir Aqlu. Security sources said the reason for dismissing Aqlu is his failure to assume his responsibilities and his inability to establish security and control the acts of rioting and chaos in the governorate. The sources explained that this decision is linked to the recent incidents in Basra, in which four Iraqis were killed in the area of Abu-al-Khasib, as well as the spread of chaos, thefts, and acts of robbery, which are sometimes practised in broad light. British sources said that Brigadier General Muhammad Kazim al-Ali has been appointed Basra Police Chief and assigned the responsibilities of supervising security affairs and establishing the police service.

**Agence France-Presse report on the same news on September 18:** Some 200 police officers gathered outside a British army base in Basra to protest the removal of the southern Iraqi city's police chief. The officers threatened to resign if Aqlu was not reinstated. Aqlu was removed by the local governor's security committee, said a coalition spokeswoman in Baghdad. Aqlu has been replaced by Mohammad Ali, a former city official under the now ousted Ba'ath regime.

### **Three Iraqi policemen wounded in clash with street vendors. (AFP)**

Three policemen were wounded and seven people arrested after a clash erupted as officers tried to chase off a group of street vendors near the main shrine in Najaf, Iraqi police said. Among those arrested was a man from the Sunni town of Ramadi, who was found with a Kalashnikov and large stock of munitions in a nearby building, according to Lieutenant Ihsan Abdel Rudha. Police said the three officers were wounded near the Imam Ali shrine, when they tried to chase away vendors armed with knives, grenades and Kalashnikovs. Two American military vehicles arrived to back up the local police.

### **Palestinians in Iraq demand repatriation. (Voice of the Mujahidin)**

Palestinians in Iraq have announced their categorical rejection of settling them in Iraq, stressing their adherence to the right of repatriation to their country, in implementation of international resolutions. They also stressed their rejection of compensation for their property in Palestine. This came in appeals addressed by the Palestinian Popular Committee in Iraq to the transitional Governing Council and the US civil administration in Iraq in the wake of a series of meetings it held recently, during which it discussed the situation of Palestinians in Iraq.

### **Head of Kurdish Yazidi sect slightly hurt in attack in northern Iraq. (AFP)**

The leader of ethnic Kurdish Yazidi sect was slightly wounded in an ambush near the city of Mosul. It was reported that Tahseen Begh suffered minor injuries when unknown gunmen opened fire on his car as he drove out of al-Qosh, some 40 kilometers north of Mosul, and fled. Begh heads an ethnic Kurdish religious group known as the Yazidis, who number several thousand and are based in Mosul and other areas in northwest Iraq. The Yazidi community issued a statement denouncing the attack on its leader.

## **September 18**

### **Iraq's Christians hold first conference in Koi Sanjak. (London-based newspaper *Al-Zaman*)**

The five-day conference of Iraq's Christians has started its sessions in Koi Sanjak town in Iraqi Kurdistan. Representatives of Iraq's Christians in the Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Arbil and Al-Suleimania provinces, in the Bahdinan areas, and the Society of Believers in Arbil in addition to delegations from Egypt, Jordan, and several other countries took part in the conference. The aim of the conference was to bring together all Christians from all the ethnic groups - Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans and Assyrians - and to call for peace, accord and prosperity for the Iraqi people. It was reported that Koi Sanjak was chosen as the conference venue because it is a safe and suitable town.

### **Kirkuk police excludes 550 Kurds from service. (Voice of the Mujahidin)**

The Kirkuk police directorate has excluded from service 550 Kurdish policeman based on the ethnic and sectarian distribution in Iraq, the city's police chief said. Maj-Gen Ahmad Salih al-Barzanji said the directorate had excluded them in compliance with the distribution percentages that guarantee the rights of Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Chaldeans and Assyrians. He explained that those excluded belong to the Kurdish militia in Al-Suleimaniya and Arbil, who had joined the police after the former regime's fall. He noted that the measure was taken based on the percentages fixed by the coalition forces, giving the Kurds 40 per cent, the Arabs 27 per cent, the Turkmen 25 per cent, and the Christians 8 per cent.

## September 19

### **Former Iraqi Defense Minister Sultan Hashim Ahmad surrenders to American general in Mosul. (AP)**

Former Gen. Sultan Hashim Ahmad, Iraq's last Defense Minister under Saddam Hussain, surrendered to the American general in charge of the north of the country after weeks of negotiations, a Kurdish mediator said. Dawood Bagistani, who arranged the surrender to Maj. Gen. David Petraeus, said Ahmad was handed over "with great respect" and was with his family at the time. Bagistani said the American military had promised to remove Ahmad's name from the list of 55 most-wanted, meaning he would not face indefinite confinement and possible prosecution.

## September 20

### **Governing Council member Akila al-Hashimi shot in Baghdad. (AFP)**

A woman member of Iraq's Governing Council, Akila al-Hashimi, was shot and seriously wounded. She was hit twice in the stomach, once in the shoulder and once in the leg outside her home in western Baghdad where she was with her driver and brother. The driver was shot twice in the back, an Iraqi official said, adding Hashimi's condition was serious. At least one or more suspects were arrested in the shooting which happened around 8:45 am. A one-time member of Saddam's Ba'ath party and protege of former deputy prime minister Tareq Aziz, she handled relations with international organisations under the old regime. As the United States began its massive military build-up prior to the March 20 invasion, Hashimi was firmly on the side of Saddam, actively drumming up international support aimed at thwarting Washington's designs on Iraq. She was one of the few Ba'athists to keep her job and was named to the Governing Council in July 2003, serving on the follow-up committee running the interim foreign ministry. Hashimi led Iraq's team to a donors and reconstruction conference in New York in June. Governing Council chairman Ahmad Chalabi said his colleague was a "courageous Iraqi patriot" who was not deterred by threats to her life. Hashimi had faced repeated threats but had continued to carry out her duties in the run-up to her next United Nations visit, Chalabi said.

**AFP report on the same news on September 25:** Iraqi Governing Council member Akila al-Hashimi died from wounds sustained in an earlier assassination bid. She underwent two stomach operations and was taken to a US medical facility, but her condition had gradually deteriorated.

## September 21

### **Iraqi Kurdish official says they don't arrest Islamic Group members. (London-based newspaper *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*)**

An official from the general office within the government of Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) denied that PUK forces had arrested members the Islamic Group in Kurdistan (Komal-e Islami) between September 19-20. The same source made it clear that the detainees, whose arrest in the cities of Suleimaniya and Raniyah



had been reported by some television channels, were suspected of having links with the extremist Ansar al-Islam (SIK) movement, which had resumed its activities in central Iraq. The official affirmed that the Islamic Group in Kurdistan (led by al-Mulla Ali Baybir, who has been detained by US forces for weeks) had good relations with the PUK. The PUK reportedly provided the Islamic Group with new offices in the Dazzah fortress areas, after it left its original offices in the regions close to the city of Halabjah, following the outbreak of the war on Iraq and the pounding of positions of the Ansar al-Islam movement by PUK fighters. The security official said, "we have no problem with the Islamic Group in Kurdistan. Members of this group carry out their activities and duties within the framework of the democratic freedoms available under the current laws. They have offices in Suleimaniya and the other regions of Iraqi Kurdistan."

#### **Mortar attack at Iraqi prison. (AFP)**

Two US soldiers were killed and 13 wounded in a mortar attack at an American-run prison west of the Iraqi capital, the US military said. The army said in a statement that no detainees at the Abu Gharib prison, about 20 kilometres from Baghdad, were killed in the attack. Abu Gharib prison, which houses 500 prisoners, has been the scene of frequent attacks. The last fatal assault was on August 16 when five Iraqi detainees were killed and 67 wounded by mortars.

#### **Three Iraqi police wounded in grenade attack on Basra police station. (AFP)**

Three Iraqi policemen were wounded when hand grenades were thrown a police station in Basra, a police spokesman said. He said the attackers drove up to the station in a pair of new white cars, then left out and lobbed the grenades at the station before fleeing. The incident comes after some 200 police officers gathered on September 18 outside a British army base in Basra to protest the removal of the Iraqi city's police chief.

#### **Blast at Iraqi shop selling pornographic videos, 10 injured. (AFP)**

Ten Iraqis were injured in a grenade attack by unidentified assailants against a shop selling pornographic video cassettes in Annabi Younes," a village near Mosul, witnesses said. Ten people were reportedly injured and the shop was badly damaged. It was reported that similar types of shops have received written threats warning them not to sell such cassettes.

### **September 22**

#### **Several hurt as car explodes outside Mosul police station. (AFP)**

A car exploded outside a police station in the northern city of Mosul, leaving several casualties, witnesses said. The explosion occurred about 1:35 pm outside the Al Naser police station in Mosul.

#### **Blast at UN offices kills two. (AFP)**

An apparent suicide blast outside the already bombed-out UN headquarters killed two people as diplomatic efforts to stabilise and rebuild the country pressed on. UN and U.S. officials said the latest bombing killed an Iraqi security guard and the bomber,

and wounded 17. It was also the second blast at the UN offices in less than a month following an August 19 truck bombing that killed 22 people, including top UN envoy Sergio Vieira di Mello.

**Statement by the UN Secretary-General's office on September 25:** On the advice of his Security Coordinator, has ordered a temporary redeployment of United Nations international staff in Iraq. There remain 42 in Baghdad and 44 in the north of the country, and those numbers can be expected to shrink further over the next few days. This is not an evacuation, just a further downsizing, and the security situation in the country remains in constant review. Meanwhile our essential humanitarian activities in Iraq continue, thanks to the efforts of our more than 4,000 national staff in the country.

### September 23

#### **Iraqi Governing Council decides to close down popular Arab news channels. (AP)**

Iraq's U.S.-appointed Governing Council has issued a decree temporarily barring two of the Middle East's most popular Arab satellite news channels access to government buildings and press conferences, saying it had suspicions that "Al-Jazeera" and "Al-Arabiya" were aware of attacks on American troops before they occurred. The decision "is a positive step to protect the Iraqi people from the poisons being broadcast by the channels," said Entifadh Qanbar, spokesman for Ahmed Chalabi, the current president of the Governing Council. Qambar said both channels were inciting violence against U.S.-led coalition forces and Iraqi officials and promoting sectarian differences. A statement by the Governing Council, signed by acting president Iyad Allawi, said in part: "The Council decided as a warning and temporary measure, to ban the Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya channels from participating in coverage of the Governing Council's activities and official press conferences. Correspondents of the two channels will not be permitted to enter the ministries or government buildings for two weeks. There will be careful monitoring of the media to verify their compliance with the aforementioned rules. The Governing Council reserves the right to take additional measures when necessary without prior warning."

#### **Iraqis stranded in Syria. (Lebanese newspaper *Daily Star* and RFE/RL Iraq Report)**

Iraqi citizens that crossed into Syria are reportedly finding it difficult to return home after the U.S. banned individuals between the ages of 18 and 45 from entering Iraq. Taxi drivers said that security measures at the Al-Tanf, Al-Yarubiyah, and Abu Kamal crossings were tightened following U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to Iraq on 13 September. The drivers claim, however, that U.S. troops at the border crossings are taking bribes, in particular from truckers wishing to cross the border. The claims have not been substantiated by independent sources. A Baghdad newspaper reported on 13 September that Syrian authorities had opened the northern border crossing near Mosul, allowing citizens from that city to cross into Syria using only identification cards and an authorized letter from the Mosul Governorate.

### **Three Iraqis killed in US operation. (AFP)**

Three Iraqis were killed and three others seriously wounded in an apparent US air strike on a pair of houses north of the town of Fallujah, hospital officials and witnesses said. Dr. Ayman Abdel Kader al-Ani of the Fallujah Hospital, said all six victims were members of the same family in the town of al-Jisr, two kilometers north of Fallujah. Witnesses said US tanks surrounded the village and troops opened up with machinegun fire before helicopters launched missiles. They reported seeing helicopters circling above and hearing the roar of warplanes. The attack was apparently aimed at two houses, which suffered damage and blown windows but were not destroyed. US military officials in Baghdad said they had no immediate report of any operation. A military spokesman in Fallujah was unavailable for comment. The operation came just hours after 250 people demonstrated in Fallujah, carrying portraits of ousted president Saddam Hussain and demanding his return to power. But there was no indication whether there was any link between the two events.

### **September 24**

#### **Two suspected Iraqi resistance leaders arrested in pre-dawn raids in Tikrit. (AP)**

Two suspected Iraqi resistance leaders believed to be organizing and financing attacks against American soldiers in an around Saddam Hussain's hometown were arrested in pre-dawn raids. The arrests in Tikrit's upper-class neighborhoods were part of an intensified campaign against people thought to be responsible for a series of deadly attacks against U.S. troops. They came one day after the U.S. military said American forces killed nine Iraqis after coming under assault and ambush four times in the region around Tikrit. "Specifically, these two individuals are associated with financing and leadership of the Fedayeen," Saddam's loyalist guerrillas, said a US officer.

#### **Iraqi police allegedly arrest members of "death squad". (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan satellite TV)**

Iraqi police forces have arrested an armed group in Baghdad's Al-Jadiriya District. Security sources said two Iraqi citizens had been closely watching for a long time the movements of the group, known as the death squad because of the numerous killings perpetrated against civilians, looting shops, attacking Iraqi police officers and blowing up power plants and oil pipelines in Beji and Kirkuk. The security source stressed that preliminary investigations with the group had revealed the group comprised people from various Arab countries and two officers of the former Republican Guards with the rank of colonel, who seemed to be in charge of the group. He added that investigations had also revealed that the Arab nationals, comprising 50 people, had come to Iraq two days after the occupation of Baghdad by US forces. An Iraqi police source alleged that members of the group had "confirmed that Al-Qa'idah had moved three quarters of its combat resources and cadres to Iraq".

#### **Two Iraqis killed, one wounded during US house search. (AFP)**

Two Iraqis were killed and another wounded after US troops opened fire while conducting a house-to-house search at a village near Baqubah, witnesses said. It was

reported that the three were shot after running away from the Americans during a search at al-Jizani, 20 kilometres north-west of Baqubah.

#### **Bomb in movie theater in Mosul. (AP)**

A bomb exploded at a Mosul movie theatre showing foreign sex films, and witnesses said two people were killed and seven were injured. The blast occurred about 3:15 p.m. at the Nojoom Cinema on Halab Street in the city's commercial district. Restrictions on the import of foreign films ended with the collapse of the Ba'ath regime, and numerous cinemas throughout the country began showing movies which push the limits of public tolerance. Various religious and political groups have been distributing handbills warning theatre owners against showing pornographic films.

#### **Palestinian refugee camp residents reportedly provided with alternative lodgings. (Iraqi United National Movement twice-weekly newspaper *Al-Sa'ah*)**

A source at UNHCR said that the majority of the registered Palestinians residing in Iraq, who number 8,000 families, expressed a desire to return voluntarily to their country, and a few of them asked to leave for a European country. The source added that the registration process was completed recently. The registration happens for the first time since 1948, the year the Palestinians, upon the request of Queen Alyah, came to Iraq accompanied by the Iraqi army. A source at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs explained that the problem of the Al-Quds Refugee Camp in the Al-Baladiyat area has been solved through providing alternative lodgings for the refugees, who were driven out of their houses in the camp at the end of the war.

#### **One Iraqi killed, 21 wounded in Baghdad bus explosion. (AFP)**

An Iraqi civilian was killed and 21 others wounded, four seriously, when a commuter bus was hit by a roadside bomb in Baghdad. Witnesses said the bomb hit the white minivan bus on Al-Imam Al-Adam Street, a main route through central Baghdad, about five minutes after a US patrol had passed through about 9:30 am. They said the bus was heavily damaged and split open after it crashed into a tree in the area, lined with numerous shops and restaurants. The blast also shattered the windows on a second minivan.

### **September 25**

#### **Bomb next to al-Aike Hotel where NBC-TV has offices, guard killed. (AP)**

A bomb placed a meter from the outside wall of the al-Aike Hotel in south-central Baghdad killed a guard. The U.S. NBC television network had offices in the hotel, and a network soundman was slightly injured. Iraqi police said the bomb was placed in a hut that housed the hotel generator.

### **September 26**

#### **Toll from Baqubah mortar attack rises to eight dead, 18 wounded. (AFP)**

Eight Iraqi civilians were killed and 18 wounded at the night of September 25 when a mortar bomb fell on a crowded square, the al-Burtuqala market, in Baqubah, northeast of Baghdad. It was reported that the casualties had been taken to Al-Yarmuk hospital.

### **Three Iraqis dead from US gunfire. (AFP)**

At least three Iraqi civilians were killed when US troops opened fire on cars at the entrance to the town of Fallujah, hospital officials said. It was reported that eight other Iraqis were wounded, four seriously, after the incident at 10:45 pm outside the town. A doctor at the hospital, said three people were pronounced dead from gunshot wounds. Witnesses earlier reported a man, woman and child in extremely serious condition but it was not known if they were the dead victims.

### **September 27**

#### **Pope approves new Chaldean archbishop of Kirkuk. (AP)**

Pope John Paul II approved the election of a new Chaldean Catholic archbishop of Kirkuk, Iraq, the Vatican said. Archbishop P. Louis Sako, 55, was selected by a Chaldean synod in Baghdad in 2002. Chaldean Catholics are the largest Christian community in Iraq, but the numbers have been steadily shrinking, mainly because of economic hardships. The Vatican's missionary news service "Fides" has said they number between 500,000 and 700,000. The spiritual leader of Iraq's Chaldean Catholics, Patriarch Raphael I Bidawid, died in Lebanon in July 2003 after a long illness. Vatican officials said they did not know when a new patriarch would be chosen.

#### **Baghdad University President dismissed for not excluding Ba'athist professors. (RFE/RL Iraq Report)**

Iraqi interim Higher Education Minister Ziad Abd al-Razzaq has reportedly dismissed Baghdad University President Sami al-Muzaffar from his position after al-Muzaffar refused to abide by an Iraqi Governing Council decision to exclude senior Ba'athists from the university's teaching and administrative staff. He said that he believes al-Muzaffar was keeping professors in their positions because of personal relations. Al-Muzaffar said in an interview that he will not recognise the authority of the interim minister. "I was not relieved from my duties and [Abd al-Razzaq] has no authority to discharge me," al-Muzaffar said. "I am a person who was elected while he is the one who has been appointed." Al-Muzaffar accused Abd al-Razzaq of sending contradictory orders to the university and denied that he kept Ba'athists on staff because of personal relations.

### **September 28**

#### **Iraqi official escapes assassination attempt. (AFP)**

An Iraqi official working on how to draft a new constitution for this occupied country has escaped an assassination attempt, an official of the US-installed Governing Council said. Jalal al-Din al-Sagheer, a prominent Shiite, escaped unscathed when his car was attacked as he was driving home at around 3:00 pm in a Baghdad suburb, said Muhannad Abdul Jabbar.

## September 29

### **Turkoman Islamist leader survives assassination attempt. (Kuwaiti news agency KUNA and RFE/RL Iraq Report)**

A Turkoman Islamic leader reportedly escaped an assassination attempt in northern Iraq. Sami Dunmer was attacked after leaving a meeting in Tikrit where Arabs and Kurds had gathered to form a municipal council. He called at the meeting for Turkoman representation in the council. It was reported that Dunmer was attacked on a road between Salah Al-Din and Tikrit, and was rushed to a hospital in Turkey for treatment for a head wound.

### **Kurdish party arrests former Mosul security chief. (Voice of the Mujahidin)**

A leader in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has said that his forces arrested former Mosul security chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Abdallah, dubbed Al-Wahsh, who was a key member of the dissolved Ba'ath Party leadership. He is also accused of murdering several civilians while in office. The PUK official maintained that Abdallah is currently in Suleimaniya, adding that the Police Directorate there is interrogating him ahead of preparing charges against him and referring him to a local court.

### **Iraqi boy killed by US gunfire during pro-Saddam rally. (Al-Jazeera satellite TV)**

Iraqi medical sources said that a ten-year-old Iraqi boy was killed when the Americans opened fire on a demonstration staged in support of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussain in Al-Huyajah.

### **Suspected Saddam loyalists attack police stations in Mosul. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Khabat*)**

Alleged loyalists of former Ba'ath regime attacked the centre for elimination of crime in Zuhur District in Mosul. This centre was the headquarters of the former Ba'ath Party. As a result of the attack, an Iraqi policeman was killed and another injured. The assailants attacked the centre again 10 minutes later. The Hadbayan police station in Halab Street also came under attack and a police officer was killed.

### **First Iraq women graduate as armed security guards. (Reuters)**

29 Iraqis became the first female state security guards in the postwar country, handed official badges and licences to carry weapons. A variety of ages, most wearing headscarves and long skirts, the women are the first to join the Facilities Protection Service (FPS) - a force which guards anything from ministries to dams - as fully fledged and armed officials. For the FPS, some women already carry out checkpoint searches, to avoid offending Iraqis by having women body-searched by men.

## September 30

### **US military raids refugee camp, arrests 16 people. (AFP)**

US troops arrested 16 people at a refugee camp four kilometres east of Baquba, said a policeman in the town. "They raided the camp and arrested 16 people, four tried to escape. The soldiers fired and wounded one of them," said the policeman. The Al-

Saad camp, a former military base, has been home to Iraqi families since the US-led war on the country.

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