Iraqi Media Monitoring

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IRAQI PRESS HEADLINES, 29 NOV 04

- Al-Zaman [daily, independent, Baghdad edition of London-based Al-Zaman]:

Nine civilians reported killed, 18 wounded in multinational forces raid- Al-Sharqiyah TV

**Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic** 29 Nov 04: Nine Iraqi civilians were killed and 18 others were wounded during a joint raid-and-search campaign by British, US and Iraqi National Guard forces on 29 November near the cities of Al-Mahawil and Al-Haswah, south of Baghdad, Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. The station quoted a doctor at the Al-Mahmudiyah Public Hospital, Ali al-Shammari, saying that medical teams evacuated the nine dead and 18 wounded during the campaign. He added that some of the wounded were in critical condition and that all casualties were civilians.

Iran denies involvement in "violence" in Iraq- Voice of the Mujahidin

**SCIRI's Voice of the Mujahidin in Arabic, 29 Nov 04**: The Iranian Embassy in Baghdad has denied a report published by a Baghdad-based newspaper to the effect that it was involved in armed acts of violence in Iraq, the Iraqi Shi'i group's Iran-based radio station Voice of the Mujahidin reported. An embassy statement said the acts of sabotage and destruction being perpetrated throughout Iraq were not triggered by Iranians who come to visit holy shrines in Iraq.

Al-Najaf officials said arrested on alleged fraud charges- Al-Najaf News

**(Al-Najaf News Network web site, 29 Nov 2004)**: Multinational forces and the Iraqi police in Al-Najaf are said to have arrested Al-Najaf's deputy governor, Ali al-Shaybani, the Al-Najaf district officer, Fairs Abu-Jazarah, and a number of members of an Al-Shaybani-led committee tasked with
compensating those affected by military operations in the city, Al-Najaf News Network web site reported on 29 November. The web site cited "a responsible source" saying the arrests were made after the authorities received information on alleged embezzlement and forgery operations.

4,000 Iraqi guardsmen protect Kirkuk oilfields, wells- Al-Sharqiyah TV
Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: Volunteers from the Iraqi National Guards have undertaken the task of protecting the oil wells and oil pipelines located in Kirkuk and Bayji along an approximately 110-km-long area, Al-Sharqiyah TV reported on 29 November. The station quoted Maj-Gen Anwar Hamad Amin, chief of the National Guards in Kirkuk Governorate, saying that two batches of 2,000-strong National Guards began on safeguarding the security of oil fields and major and secondary pipelines connecting Kirkuk with Bayji on 23 November. He said the move was made following the escalation of attacks against oil wells and fields during the past few weeks.

ELECTIONS

Election candidates' registration deadline extended- Al-Sharqiyah TV
Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission has announced that registration centres for the upcoming legislative elections will be kept open for a further 10 days, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. It explained that it had decided to extend the period for approving the list of candidates by 10 days in response to demands from an increasing number of Iraqi political parties, organizations and figures. The final date for registration will therefore be the end of the official working day on Sunday 5 December 2004 for the governorates, while for Baghdad it will be the evening of Friday 10 December. The statement stressed that this extension is final and that no applications will be accepted for approval beyond these dates. The Commission announced that applications from 156 political parties and entities and independent figures have been approved so far. It is expected that this number will rise in the light of the latest extension.

Electoral Commission denies reports of postponement request- Voice of the Mujahidin
SCIRI's Voice of the Mujahidin in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: An official spokesman of the Iraq's Electoral Commission, Farid Ayar, has denied receiving any request to postpone the elections, Shi'i-backed radio station Voice of the Mujahidin reported on 28 November. Ayar dismissed reports that the commission was studying a request by 15 parties and political entities for a six-month postponement as baseless.
Iraq Islamic Party calls for postponing elections "at least" six months- Dar al-Salam Radio

Dar Al-Salam Radio, Iraqi Islamic Party-affiliated, 29 Nov 2004: The Iraqi Islamic Party has issued a statement clarifying the party’s stance towards the upcoming general elections. Following is the text of the statement:

Statement No 53, issued by the Iraqi Islamic Party on the party’s stance towards the general elections.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
The Iraqi Islamic Party believes that elections in general are primarily an appropriate political option to liberate our country, achieve national sovereignty, build the constitutional and political institutions and provide an opportunity to all sides to participate in a fair manner in the political process in the Iraqi arena. The elections, as a political practice, are not required for their own sake. Rather, they should serve as a means through which Iraq can move to a better future. Therefore, it is imperative to provide the necessary factors to ensure their success. Those factors are:
1. Creating the necessary security conditions and establishing stability in all areas in Iraq
2. Getting the Iraqi Electoral Commission to satisfactorily answer all legal and technical contests with regard to its mechanism and the laws it issued.
3. Achieving balance in the offices of the commission.
4. Ensuring fair and transparent elections by seeking the help of neutral sides such as the Arab League representatives, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the United Nations and the EU to oversee the elections
5. Suspending the emergency law which restricts civilian liberties and shackles electoral activities.

In view of the absence of these conditions at the present time, the Iraqi Islamic Party - backed a large group of parties, movements and gatherings which are influential in the Iraqi political arena - has taken the initiative to call for postponing the elections for at least six months in the hope that the delay will help create an atmosphere conducive to achieving the success of the elections and realize the aspirations of the Iraqi people.
The Iraqi Islamic Party, out of its religious and national responsibility, hopes that all sides that are still insisting on conducting the elections on their set date will reconsider their stance in light of the facts on the ground. In view of their insistence, the party will be obliged to reconsider its participation in the elections in a manner commensurate with its political project.

God is our guide

The Political Party, 16 Shawwal 1425 AH, corresponding to 29 November 2004

SCIRI welcomes government decision not to postpone elections- Voice of the Mujahidin

SCIRI’s Voice of the Mujahidin in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: The Shi’i-backed radio station Voice of the Mujahidin on 28 November said the Supreme
Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraqi (SCIRI) welcomed the interim government's decision not to postpone the elections. Spokesman Ammar Al-Hakim said the elections were the shortest way to achieving democracy and added that there was no suitable security plan to restore stability if they were postponed.

**Al-Najaf clerics oppose election delay- Voice of the Mujahidin**

SCIRI's Voice of the Mujahidin in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: The religious authorities in Al-Najaf have rejected any postponement of the elections beyond their set date of 30 January 2005, the Shi'i-backed radio station Voice of the Mujahidin reported on 28 November. The station cited Muhammad Husayn al-Hakim saying the matter was indisputable.

**VOM commentary says election delay would benefit "occupation"- Voice of the Mujahidin**

SCIRI's Voice of the Mujahidin in Arabic, 29 Nov 04: A commentary on the Shi'i-backed radio station Voice of the Mujahidin on 28 November criticized the stand taken by Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord Movement in calling for a delay in the Iraq elections. The station said the call was "not compatible" with the official stand and a statement by Allawi himself about the need to hold elections on their scheduled date. The station said that the "occupation authorities" also sought a postponement to prolong their presence in Iraq. "If they manage to postpone them this time, they could postpone them again and again," it said. It added that the sole beneficiary of any postponement would be the "occupation forces".

**Kirkuk official sees no obstacles to expatriated voters- Al-Dustur**

Al -Dustur, Baghdad, independent daily in Arabic by former journalist Basim al-Sheikh 29 Nov 04: The Chairman of Kirkuk Advisory Council Tahsin Muhammad Ali said he does not see the issue of Kirkuk's expatriated people as an obstacle to participation in elections, Iraqi newspaper Al-Dustur reported on 29 November. He said it is ration cards and Iraqi citizenship certificates that are used for registering and those people who returned to their homes in the city after the fall of the Saddam regime would be included in the election register. Ali said he hoped all Kirkuk's residents would participate in this political process.

**IRAQI BROADCAST MEDIA SUMMARIES, 29 Nov 04**

Programme summary of Al-Iraqiyah TV news 29 Nov 04

- Prime Minister Iyad Allawi sets new curfew time in Baghdad.
• Terror acts decreasing says Allawi. Video report covers his comments on Al-Iraqiyah on success of Al-Fallujah offensive.
• Success of political process to affect security situation. Video report covers his comments.
• Allawi says interim government firm on restoring security. Video report highlights his comments.
• Allawi to meet Iraqi expatriates in Amman, says government source.
• Allawi meets Kurdish leaders in Salah-al-Din.
• Interim National Assembly discusses ways to improve national dialogue. Video report
• Assembly says no election delay, calls on political parties to abide by polls date.
• Independent electoral commission sets Thursday 2 December deadline for registering political groups. Video report
• Cairo considering Bahrain proposal for Iraq reconciliation conference, says Egyptian diplomat. Arab league chief says reconciliation should precede election. Video report
• Multinational force launches offensive south of Baghdad. Video report covers operation against positions of terror suspects in village, leaflets inciting people to violence found.
• Car bomb outside police station kills 12 in Al-Ramadi.
• Iran vows not to allow terrorists to cross border to Iraq.
• Baghdad marks its annual day. Video report
• Baghdad suffers shortage of gas and fuel. Video report
• King of Jordan strips half brother of title of crown prince. Video report
• looks into decision.
• EU and Arab foreign ministers hold meeting in Holland. Video report
• Socialist Democrats win Romania election. Video report
• Ukraine Supreme court hears polls fraud claims. Video report
• Association of South East Asian Nations starts summit in Laos. Video report
• Students play at university of Al-Mustansiriyah, the first in 30 years. Video report

Programme summary of Voice of Mujahidin radio news 29 Nov 04

• Iraqi National Assembly deputy speaker says assembly objects to requests to postpone elections, delay will harm political process ...
• Planning minister says government will study issue of postponing elections ...
• Iran says will not allow any "terrorist" to cross border into Iraq ..
• Two US soldiers killed south of Baghdad ...
• AFP says five US soldiers killed in Al-Anbar Governorate over past three days ...
• Iraqi police and National Guard sources say 17 armed men killed and nine wounded in clashes south of Baghdad ...
• Car bomb kills five Iraqi citizens and wounds four in Samarra, two US soldiers wounded south of Baghdad ...
• Iraqi official and popular circles reject delay in election ...
• US General Abizaid says US forces instructed to get ready for January election ...
• Bulgarian president expresses hope that situation in Iraq will improve in aftermath of election ...
• Kuwaiti court begins trying 22 persons suspected of belonging to group which recruits fighters against US forces in Iraq ...
• Egyptian Foreign Ministry says Egypt holding consultations on Bahraini proposal to host Iraqi national reconciliation conference ...

IRAQI PRESS HEADLINES, 29 NOV 04

Al-Zaman [daily, independent, Baghdad edition of London-based Al-Zaman]:

• Border control on agenda of interior ministers' meeting of Iraq neighbours ...
• National guards: Clashes in Jibilah; 24 detained; weapons confiscated ...
• Al-Yawar: Committed to hold elections; Iraq not satellite of any regional state ...
• Recovery of oil exports from south; Riyadh offers facilities to export oil products to Iraq ...
• Six mortar bombs target emergency regiment, police station in Ba'qubah ...
• Six infantry brigades, 27 police regiments formed in Baghdad; leaflets distributed to residents on security threats ...
• Two police patrols come under fire in Al-Za'faraniyah ...
• Mines defused in Tikrit ...
• Health Ministry sends medical teams to Al-Anbar.

Al-Bayan [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party]:

• Vice-President Ibrahim al-Ja'fari: Iraqi people pin hopes on elections, disagree with calls for delay ...
• Leaders of key political parties categorically reject postponement of elections ...
• Negroponte in Al-Fallujah (news agencies quoted) ...
• Loans to be granted to owners of houses damaged in military operations ...
• Fifty-one per cent of oil sales allocated to implement 700 projects ...
UNICEF still concerned about psychological conditions of Iraqi children ...
Turkish electricity stations rented to operate cement factories in Iraq.

Al-Nahdah [Baghdad, daily political newspaper]:

- Council of ministers discusses election delay proposal today ...
- Al-Ja'fari praises positive step taken by creditor nations (Kuna quoted) ...
- Forty-three insurgents arrested in Mosul; 42 others in Al-Hillah (Kuna quoted) ...
- [Deputy leader of Independent Democratic Grouping] Mahdi al-Hafid: We seek election postponement to provide necessary requirements for success ...
- First joint investment operation in ports sector launched ... Justice minister: Death sentence applied in narrowest limit.

KURDISH NEWS, 29 NOV 2004

Iraqi Kurdish leader Barzani, UK envoys discuss elections, Kirkuk-(KDP) satellite TV

(KDP) satellite TV Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party on 29 November
Leader [of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, Mas'ud] Barzani has received in Salah-al-Din British Ambassador to Iraq David [as heard; Edward] Chaplin and Consul-General in Kirkuk Dr Noel Guckian.
In a meeting, the Iraqi political process, the security situation and the process of the general elections were discussed. The question of Kirkuk and Mosul was the focus of a different part of the meeting. In this context, leader Barzani expressed the views of the KDP to the visiting delegation and explained that the normalization of the deformed state of Kirkuk was the key to resolving the issue in Kirkuk, by pointing out that the resolution of the issue must be in accordance with the relevant article of the Iraqi State Administration Law and that the issue must be taken into considerations in a serious and sensitive manner.
He said: The KDP is totally against the elections of the governorate council to be carried out before the situation in the Kirkuk Governorate is normalized.
He indicated that the internally displaced people who had not yet returned to their home must return and that there must no obstacles preventing the returnees from taking part in the elections.
Leader Barzani expressed his anxiety towards the security situation in the Mosul [Ninawa] Governorate and urged to change the ways in which the security in the Mosul Governorate was handled, by adopting positive steps that would contribute to improving the situation and eliminating the terrorism phenomena and terrorist groups.
On his part, the British ambassador to Iraq pointed out the stance of the British government on establishing a federal, democratic and united Iraq, that would serve the interest of all the Iraqi peoples, particularly in the Kirkuk Governorate, which needs a drastic solution to its problem.

It is noteworthy that the KDP Political Bureau Secretary Fadil Mirani and the head of KDP relations abroad Safin Dizayee were present in the meeting. The British ambassador to Baghdad and his accompanying delegation visited the Council of Ministers of the Kurdistan regional government and were received by the head of the [KDP-led] Kurdistan regional government Nechirvan Barzani.

In a meeting, in addition to discussion on the current situation in Kurdistan, the political process in Iraq and preparations for general elections in Iraq and the Kurdistan region, talks were also held on business opportunities and domestic and foreign productions, with the view to developing commercial activities in the Kurdistan region.

PUK paper says Sharm al-Shaykh conference "ratified" Iraqi right to federalism- Al-Ittihad

Al-Ittihad: The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) newspaper, 29 Nov 04: carried an editorial saying that the Sharm al-Shaykh conference participants were unequivocal that the issue of federalism in Iraq was not controversial. The article cited Egyptian Foreign Minister Abu al-Ghaytt saying that external forces could not impose federalism on the Iraqi people nor or keep it from them. "As it was unanimously endorsed in the Security Council Resolution 1546, it was also ratified in Sharm al-Shaykh conference that federalism is a legitimate right of the Iraqi people," the editorial said. "Others have no right to interfere with this."

Iraqi Kurds would not oppose vote delay – Barzani

Khabat 29 Nov 04: Kurdish leader Mas'ud Barzani has said he is in favour of holding the elections as scheduled. He added, however, that if there was "conviction" among Iraqi parties to postpone the elections for a period if not more than six months, and if that would "guarantee" comprehensive and fair elections, the Kurds would not oppose the move.

Updates from Iraqi Kurdish Press 29 Nov 2004

Khabat daily, issued in Erbil by the KDP, 29 November 2004

• During his reception to the Special Representative of UN Secretary-General (SRSG), the KDP leader Massoud Barzani insisted on normalizing the situations in Kirkuk before the elections. In his Slahaddin HQ, Barzani received Saturday the elections supervisor and Kofi Anna’s Special Representative Ashraf Qazi, wit his accompanying delegation. They discussed the Iraqi and Kurdistan Region status quo, the Iraqi country-wide elections, the security situation and SCR1546
that deals with the Iraqi and Kurdistan Region national assemblies, as well as governorate municipal council elections. The discussions also covered stances of major Iraqi political parties, the recent meetings in Dukan, the situation in Kirkuk and the prerequisites for the elections. Barzani proclaimed the situation in Kirkuk should be controlled and settled according to the Iraqi Transitional Administrative Law (TAL). He also stressed on the Kurdistani political parties’ support for the elections. On his Side, the SRSG valued the views of leader Barzani and Kurdistani political parties on the elections. As for Kirkuk, the SRSG expressed his support for the TAL article that stipulates resolving the Kirkuk issue.

Khabat daily, issued in Erbil by the KDP, 28 November 2004

- KRG-Erbil PM Nechirvan Barzani received SRSG Ashraf Qazi, and a number of his advisors Sunday morning. Qazi expressed his happiness for visiting Kurdistan Region and all the eye-catching changes materialized [in the region]. The discussions also covered the duties encumbered upon the United Nations according to its mandate by SCR1546 to help advance the Iraqi political process, reconstruction, humanitarian affairs and the national reconciliation process. The two sides also discussed the elections in general and reiterated the importance of conducting the elections in order to step forward towards the future stage of rebuilding Iraq and re-drawing eth constitution. Also in the meeting, PM Barzani and his guest thoroughly discussed the Kurdistan Region share [of the Iraqi oil revenues] under the defunct SCR986 and related issues. The two sides agreed to study the issue and work out proper solutions to the best satisfaction of both parties in line with the UN principles. In this regard, PM Barzani stressed the importance of the UN at this stage and expressed his government’s facilitation and cooperation for the UN operations regarding the political process. The visiting delegation had a special meeting earlier the day with a KRG delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Serkis Aghajan and comprising a number of ministers. At the meeting, the DPM presented a briefing on situation in Kurdistan region. The two sides exchanged views on the funds allocated [for Kurdistan region] under SCR986 and the 2.2% issue and reached a consensus to find proper solutions to the discussed issues. It was agreed that technical experts from both sides would meet to study the issues and propose proper solutions and that the KRG would submit a memorandum [to the UN] covering the points that need further responses.

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NB: This is not an official document. The information contained therein was compiled by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Information Office. If you have any questions/suggestions, please contact us at (+ 962 550-4631/4703 or Cell. + 962 77 619 731 jarrahi@un.org or alsokhni@un.org