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**IRAQI NEWS for 13 Dec 04**

**US warplanes bombard Al-Fallujah- Al-Sharqiyah TV**

*Al-Sharqiyah TV, Baghdad, in Arabic 13 Dec 04:* US warplanes this morning bombarded Al-Fallujah, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. A journalist accompanying the US troops said the bombardment targeted the Al-Askari neighbourhood in eastern Al-Fallujah: columns of smoke were seen rising from the area. Battles also resumed in the streets of Al-Fallujah. The report pointed out the raids follow the killing of seven US Marines the previous day in Al-Anbar governorate, where Al-Fallujah is located.

**Seventy electoral lists registered for elections- Al-Sharqiyah TV**

*Al-Sharqiyah TV, Baghdad, in Arabic 13 Dec 04:* Farid Ayyar, official spokesman for the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, said on 13 December that the commission had received 70 electoral lists from the political entities, parties, and figures participating in the general elections scheduled for 30 January 2005, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. He added that these lists are distributed as follows: six represent coalition lists while 64 others represent independent parties and figures. He noted that among the parties that submitted their lists is the Iraqi Islamic Party, headed by Muhsin Abd-al-Hamid. The Commission earlier announced that it approved the applications of 232 political entities and figures to participate in the upcoming general elections. It also extended the deadline for approving the lists of entities and figures until 15 December.

**Spokesman denies Al-Sistani support for single electoral list- Al-Sharqiyah TV**

*Al-Sharqiyah TV, Baghdad, in Arabic 13 Dec 04:* A spokesman for Grand Ayatollah Al-Sayyid Ali al-Sistani on 13 December denied Al-Sistani's support for any electoral list, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. Shaykh Ahmad al-Safi, representative of Al-Sistani in Al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Al-Sistani had not yet adopted a particular list, giving citizens the right to choose. He noted that Al-Sistani had tasked a committee with negotiating with the appropriate parties and that it was this committee which had drawn up The Unified Iraqi Coalition list announced on 9 December. (Al-Sharqiyah TV 1000 gmt 13 Dec 04)

**Islamic Da'wah Party presents political programme- Al-Bayan newspaper**

*Al-Bayan [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party] 13 Dec 04:*
The Islamic Al-Da'wah Party published its political programme in its Al-Bayan newspaper on 12 December. The programme read as follows:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

"And say: Work (righteously); soon will God observe your work, and His Apostle and the believers." (105: Al-Tawbah) The Islamic Da'wah Party seeks to achieve the following political programme:

1. To build a federal democratic constitutional Iraq within the framework of national unity, while emphasizing the unity of Iraq and its territory, people and sovereignty. Iraqi citizens - Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Faili [Shi'i] Kurds, and others from all the religions, including Muslims (Shi'is and Sunnis), Christians, Sabeans, Yazidis, and others - shall be equal in rights and duties without any racial, religious or sectarian discrimination.

2. To ensure security and peace for all citizens.

3. To draft a permanent constitution for the country which does not conflict with the principles and values of Islam and which does not legislate anything that conflicts with the Islamic constants upheld by the majority of Iraqis. A committee elected by the Iraqi people shall draft the constitution, which must obtain the approval of the nation through a direct, free and fair referendum. It is also essential to choose the electoral system that is suitable for our society with its current national, regional, religious, sectarian and political composition. The system must guarantee the chances of participation and avoid other systems that might exclude any of the components owing to the nature of its mechanism and the type of electoral system adopted.

Other articles stated the party's aims regarding a variety of issues, including social security, healthcare, housing, compensation for families of "martyrs", the position of women, education, rule of law, cancelling Iraqi debt, oil policy, international relations, religious freedom, "objective and committed" media, arts and education.

Al-Najaf preacher denies Shi'is main beneficiary of elections- Al-Najaf News

(Al-Najaf News Network website 10 Dec 04): In his Friday prayers sermon in Al-Najaf on 10 December, Sadr al-Din al-Qubbanji said that fear of Iranian or disproportionate Shi'i influence in the upcoming elections was "illusory" and "artificial". Remarks made by Jordanian King Abdullah II concerning Iranian voters crossing into Iraq were not worth discussing, he said, and "are no more than a joke".

Iraqi president interviewed, expresses belief in prosperous future- Al-Sharq al-Awsat

elections in Iraq will be successful and that violent opposition to the coalition presence will fail, London-based newspaper Al-Sharq al-Awsat reported on 12 December. In an interview Al-Yawar added that there was definite evidence proving that Iran and Syria were supporting the anti-coalition actions in Iraq, and he said that only Iraqis themselves, with a new army and security bodies, could establish peace in Iraq. Al-Yawar also said that the political party he leads, "Iraqis", was moving towards cooperating with "other forces and figures" and that it would soon announce the formation of an alliance.

**Minister says power cut due to sabotage- Al-Sharqiyah TV**

**Al-Sharqiyah TV, Baghdad, in Arabic 13 Dec 04:** Iraqi Electricity Minister Ayham al-Samarra'i said on 13 December that the previous day's nationwide power outage was due to an act of sabotage at one of the country's main power-generating plants, Baghdad Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. A major fire at the Bayji thermal plant in Salah al-Din Governorate, 200 km north of Baghdad, damaged the fuel and water supply systems which led to a sudden halt in operations and the immediate loss of 500 MW, the minister said. The knock-on effect led to a total collapse of power systems in Iraq, but emergency work by maintenance teams at the Bayji plant restored the supply.

**Crude oil production in south back to normal- Al-Sharqiyah TV**

**Al-Sharqiyah TV, Baghdad, in Arabic 13 Dec 04:** The Oil Ministry confirmed on 13 December that production of crude oil in southern Iraq has returned to the normal rate of 1.8m barrels per day after the completion of maintenance work, Baghdad Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. A South Oil Company source recalled that on 25 November, crude production in the south had dropped by 50 per cent owing to maintenance operations by the US Halliburton Company. The source added that the North Oil Company started intermittent oil pumping operations two weeks ago to the Turkish port of Ceyhan at a rate of 50,000 barrels per day.

**The scheduled date of the elections approaches- Al-Mu'tamar**

Al-Mu'tamar on 13 December publishes on the front page a 600-word "exclusive" report stating that as the scheduled date of the elections approaches, pressure for their postponement in the UN's corridors is increasing. The report cites Dr Ahmad Chalabi, leader of the Iraqi National Congress, warning that any step in this direction would lead to polarity harming the Iraqi unity. Dr Mudar Shawkat, "the prominent Iraqi politician," said that the postponement is possible if the UN makes a decision in this regard. The report cites well-informed sources in New York informing the newspaper that the campaign for the postponement is led by Brahimi, the former envoy of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to Iraq, who contributed to the formation of the interim government. The sources added that a number of regional countries, especially Jordan and the UAE, are pressuring Brahimi in this direction. The sources explained that through its diplomatic channels, the Iraqi Government has secretly warned the officials of the US and other permanent UN Security Council members about holding the elections on schedule.
Iraqi National Unity Grouping, political entities have submitted their electoral lists- Al-Ufuq

Al-Ufuq on 13 December publishes on the front page a 120-word follow-up report stating that the Iraqi National Unity Grouping, the Iraqi Communist Party, and the Iraqi Islamic Party have submitted their 275-member electoral lists. The report adds that a number of other political entities have also submitted their electoral lists. The report cites Ayatollah Al-Sistani's aide, Ahmad al-Safi, as saying that the religious authority in Al-Najaf does not want or call for a political system similar to that of Iran in Iraq. Al-Safi affirmed that it does not sponsor any particular electoral list in the upcoming elections, adding that its role was limited to appointing a reliable committee to discuss the issue with the concerned political forces.

IRAQI MEDIA Programme summaries, 13 Dec 04

Iraqi Islamic Party Dar al-Salam radio 13 Dec 04:

- Car bomb kills or wounds scores of people and destroys a several cars near Baghdad's Green Zone and another car bomb kills or wounds a number of US soldiers in the city of Al-Hadithah
- US Army in Iraq says seven of its soldiers are killed in the Al-Anbar Governorate, and the British consulate in Basra Governorate says it came under a mortar attack last night ...
- Iraq's Al-Yawir criticizes the United States and Britain for dissolving the Iraqi Army and calls for holding the elections on time. He also criticizes Iran and Syria for failing to control their borders with Iraq.

Baghdad Al-Iraqiyah TV news 13 Dec 04

- Interim cabinet committed to holding polls on time, says vice-president. Video report
- Seven killed in Baghdad car bomb. Video report covers violence across Iraq, vehicle collision
- New police recruits graduate from Karbala police academy. Video report highlights ceremony
- Police academy in Al-Muthanna holds training for emergency force. Video report
- Multinational force source denies former President Saddam Husayn has gone on hunger strike as Iraqis mark first anniversary of his capture. Video report says Iraqis jubilant over his detention, their comments
- Public satisfaction following Ministry of Oil measures to ease fuel shortage in Baghdad. Video report
• Forum discusses protection from radiation and its effect on environment. Video report highlights focus of forum
• Students praise introduction of Internet in Iraq. Video report

**IRAQI PRESS Press Headlines & Comments, 14 Dec 04**

*Al-Nahdhah [Baghdad, political daily newspaper Headlines 14 dec:]*

• Dr Al-Pachachi meets with Sadr Movement representatives Deteriorating security in certain parts of Iraq a major problem calling for deferred elections US aerial bombardment of Al-Fallujah positions
• Decision to disband former Iraqi army criticized by Al-Yawar
• WTO starts talks on Iraq acquiring membership
• Twenty-four Iraqi citizens killed, wounded in Baghdad car bombing Southern oil production back to previous rate
• Australia to provide Iraq with trainers in logistics
• Lebanese captured in Al-Sulaymaniyah

*Al-Dustur [Baghdad, general independent political daily newspaper Headlines 14 dec]*:

• National Assembly members dub Jordanian king's statements as interference in Iraq's affairs
• Al-Yawar warns of new Hitler emerging if unrest continues
• Al-Barzani web site divides Iraq into three parts
• British consulate in Basrah comes under shelling
• Ninawa mayoralty premises attacked by gunmen,
• Mosul local council member kidnapped
• Georgia planning for more troops in Iraq
• Mithal al-Alussi demands Palestinian leadership apologize to Iraqi nation
• US dispatching Jewish advisers to operate in Iraq (Agencies quoted).

**Has the Iraqi lesson finally begun to sink in, a commentary on Al-Bayan**

*Al-Bayan [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party] [From commentary by Salim Rasul] 14 Dec 04: "Has the Iraqi lesson finally begun to sink in? Perhaps, yes. Arab masses have begun citing the new state of political life in Iraq as a model sharply in contrast with their own objectionable political conditions. There were angry demonstrations in Cairo yesterday protesting president*
Husni Mubarak's desire to run for a fifth term of office. The demonstrators touted banners with the word 'Enough' written on them, meaning to say that they have had enough of the theory of the one-and-only leader who should stay at the helm until the day he dies. Other banners read 'No to Power Inheriting'; an allusion to the tacitly promoted scheme of presenting Jamal Mubarak, the incumbent president's son, as the legitimate heir to the presidency after his father's demise. A demonstrator was cited as shouting, "Look at Iraq. There are thousands of parties there. Why should we have only one party and one leader?"

_Euphoria and Former Regime followers-_ **Al-Mada**

Al-Mada [Baghdad, daily, independent newspaper published by Al-Mada Media, Culture and Arts Corporation] [From commentary by Ahmad Abd-al-Qadir]14 Dec 04: "The immediate aftermath of the fall of the former regime was a time of euphoria for all Iraqis, except for the very few who were as furious at the loss of their past privileges as they were afraid their time of reckoning had come. Fearing having to face justice, their first reaction was to disappear into their hideouts. Yet, seeing that the new authorities' lack of firmness in tracking them down, they have resurfaced with added audacity, to resume their standard trade of committing atrocities against the Iraqi people, backed up by foreign quarters hell-bent on tearing Iraq apart by stoking dissent in every corner of it."

_Differences over elections, signal a healthy Iraqi political atmosphere-_ **Al-Zaman**

Al-Zaman [daily, independent, Baghdad edition of London-based Al-Zaman][From commentary by Fatih Abd-al-Salam]14 dec 04: "Differences over whether the upcoming elections should be deferred or held on schedule signal a healthy Iraqi political atmosphere, despite the simultaneous emergence of certain worrying signs of looming evil that, unless swiftly contained within the confines of certain political parties and individual politicians, may soon break out like an epidemic threatening to engulf the whole nation. What seems to be odd in this political scene is that some elections-on-schedule proponents are so adamant that they allow no room for dialogue with their pro-postponement opponents. Not only this, they do not even hesitate to go so far as ostracizing them - a strange attitude, hardly in line with the democracy we are trying to achieve."

_Kurdish News, 13 DEC 04,_
Barzani discusses security with defence minister Kurdistan TV

Kurdistan Satellite TV 13 Dec 04: KDP leader Mas'ud Barzani met Iraqi Defence Minister Hazim Sha'lan and senior ministry officials for detailed discussions about the security situation, Kurdish TV reported on 13 December. They stressed the need for mutual cooperation and coordination to tackle terrorism and maintain security in the run-up to the elections.

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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 jarrar@un.org or alsokhni@un.org