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- Iraqi local official, two guards abducted, national guard killed in Samarra
- Iraqi Ummah Party member killed by gunmen in Baghdad
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- Iraqi minister says Al-Fallujah residents to receive urgent compensation
- Ahmad Chalabi expresses surprise over calls to delay Iraqi elections
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IRAQI NEWS, 26 Dec 2004

Senior Iraqi police officer assassinated in Baghdad

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: An Iraqi civil defence officer was killed while his driver was wounded after gunmen carried out an attack near his house in Baghdad on 26 December, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. A police source told the channel that the gunmen attacked a car in which Col Yasin Ibrahim Jawad was riding in Al-Saydiyah neighbourhood, in western Baghdad, at 0800. Police and National Guard patrols began searches for the perpetrators who fled the scene.

Iraqi local official, two guards abducted, national guard killed in Samarra

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: Unknown gunmen have kidnapped Muhsin al-Sabhan, the subdistrict officer of Al-Sharqat, north of Samarra, and two of his guards, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. Col Abdallah al-Juburi said that the gunmen released the two guards after two hours and kept Al-Sabhan, who was kidnapped on 25 December while on his way to his home in Mosul, in northern Iraq. In a related development, the channel said, an explosive charged went off while a National Guard patrol was travelling on the road between Samarra and Al-Dulu'iyah, north of Baghdad. Capt Mudar Ali al-Baldawi said that a National Guard member was killed and a civilian was wounded as a result of the explosion.

Iraqi Ummah Party member killed by gunmen in Baghdad

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: A leader in the Iraqi Ummah Party was killed by unidentified gunmen in Baghdad on 26 December, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. In a press statement, party leader Mithal al-Alusi said that three unidentified armed men in an Opel car opened fire and killed Muhammad Abd-al-Husayn as he was leaving his house in Abu-Ghurayb area, west of Baghdad, at 0600 gmt.

Iraqi governor says Al-Najaf bomber, backers identified

Al-Diyar Satellite Channel In Arabic, Baghdad, 26 Dec 04: Al-Najaf Governor Adnan al-Zarfi said that the person who carried out the bombing in Al-Najaf last week as well as "the party behind him" have been identified, Iraqi Al-Diyar TV reported. He said evidence and documents had been collected and people directly linked to this issue had been arrested. Al-Zarfi said that extensive search campaigns were being conducted in the city and that all suspects were being pursued and would be detained until after the elections end on 30 January.
Iraqi minister says Al-Fallujah residents to receive urgent compensation

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: Hajim al-Hasani, Iraqi minister of industry and minerals and head of the Al-Fallujah Relief Aid and Reconstruction Committee, has announced that 355 teams from various ministries and state departments have been formed to assess the damage inflicted on citizens' property and specify compensation, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. He said that urgent compensation would be paid to the residents of Al-Fallujah who return to the city, and that foodstuffs and medical aid would be extended to the displaced families.

Ahmad Chalabi expresses surprise over calls to delay Iraqi elections

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmad Chalabi said that the presence of a large number of candidates and parties reflects the desire of the Iraqi people to hold general elections, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. In an interview with Al-Sharqiyah TV, Chalabi expressed surprise at calls to postpone holding elections. He said that this contradicts the desire of the Iraqi people.

Iraqi minister rejects using militias to protect polling stations

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic, 26 Dec 04: Iraqi Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib said on 26 December that ministry establishments were capable of protecting polling stations throughout Iraq and ensuring that the voting process was conducted safely, Iraqi Al-Sharqiyah TV reported. In an interview with the channel, Al-Naqib said that seeking the help of local militias to ensure the safety of the elections process would have a negative impact. Those who wanted to volunteer to maintain security were welcome to join the police or the Iraqi army, he added.

Iraqi Shi'i SCIRI cleric sermon on elections

Al-Najaf News Network, Iraqi newspaper in Arabic, 24 Dec 04: Sadr-al-Din Al-Qabanji, a Shi'i cleric held Friday prayers at the headquarters of the the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution (SCIRI) on 24 December, the Iraqi newspaper Al-Najaf News Network web site reported. In the first sermon, Al-Qabanji spoke about the reason behind the council's participation in the political process that the religious authority called for. He said that there are two reasons: The first is "in order not to give the occupation any legitimate recognition" and the second is because "our participation is aimed at achieving independence in laying down the country's constitution" and in forming a government that is elected by the people.
Iraqi Communication Minister :“Free Internet form next year”

**Khabat, Kurdish newspaper 26 Dec 04:** The Iraqi communication minister said that internet access will be available free of charge to all Iraqis from the beginning of 2005, Kurdish newspaper Khabat reported. Users will only have to pay fees for using the telephone, it said. At present internet users pay two Iraqi dinars per minute in central and southern Iraq, it added.

**IRAQI PRESS COMMENTS on 26 Dec 2004**

**The political process in Iraq- Al-Da’wah**

*Al-Da'wah [Baghdad, weekly newspaper in Arabic published by the Central Bureau of the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party] An article by Abbas Sarhan:* "The political crisis in Iraq did not start in April 2003, adding that in fact, many observers believe that this date represents the beginning of the end of Iraq's crisis. The article says that Iraq's crisis began decades before the occupation; namely, since the formation of the Iraqi state on an Uthman theory that excluded all Iraqi factions except one. The article says this particular faction has been rebelling and attempting to block the political process in order to regain its privileges. The article says that while it is true that the dissolved Governing Council and interim government were not elected, they do represent a large proportion of the Iraqi components, as is the case with the Association of Muslim Scholars, which claims that it represents the Sunnis and Arabs. The article concludes that despite the intensity of the campaign against progress in Iraq, the process is moving in the right direction.”

**French hostages and the French policy toward Iraq- Al-Bayan**

*Al-Bayan [Baghdad, daily newspaper in Arabic published by the Islamic Al-Da'wah Party] An article by Zaynab al-Khafaji:* The article says that although France affirmed that it did not pay a ransom for their release, it may have agreed to pay "a political ransom," referring to the French stance in the Sharm al-Shaykh Conference and its calls for national reconciliation. The article urges the Iraqi President Al-Yawir to clarify relations with France in his projected visit to France.

"There is no New Iraq,"- Al-Sabah al-Jadid

*Al-Sabah al-Jadid, Bagdad, independent daily, in Arabic: An article by Jasim al-Yas,* entitled "There is no New Iraq," in which he discusses the idea of "building man in the new Iraq." The writer says that this is "wrong, because it is built on totalitarian concepts that want to create an extreme one-sided ideology." He adds that the Iraqi culture is composed of "cumulative experiences." He says change should take in the stages of development in the infrastructure, i.e. industry and agriculture, and the superstructures, i.e. the educational system.
"What is the Fate of those Detained by the Authorities?"- Al-Mashriq

Al-Mashriq [Baghdad, by Al-Mashriq Institution for media and cultural investments] An article by Muhammad Samarah: The writer comments on the statements "frequently delivered" by government officials, saying that "a number of terrorists has been arrested." The author says that it is the "right" of any Iraqi citizen to know "what is happening to these detainees, and why they committed their crimes."

The "performance" of the Iraqi Government- Al-Ittijah al-Akhar

Al-Ittijah al-Akhar on 25 December carries on page 28 a 500-word article by Abd-al-Jabbar Yusif al-Siqar, which comments on the "performance" of the Iraqi Government. The writer says that the government should have "paid more attention" to the following points: accelerating reconstruction process, eliminating administrative corruption, and solving the problems of unemployment and public services.

PROGRAMME SUMMARIES, 26 Dec 2004

Al-Sharqiyah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic

- Al-Fallujah refugees continue to return home, hold funerals for their dead. Video of bodies, damage in Al-Fallujah
- Industry and minerals minister announces formation of 355 teams to assess damage and pay compensation in Al-Fallujah. Video of damage in Al-Fallujah
- Iraqi Defence Ministry forms a new force to protect oil installations and pipes. Video of burning oil pipes
- Iraqi police arrest two Iraqis carrying explosives and mortars in separate incidents in Karbala. Map of Iraq
- Iraqi interior minister affirms forces are capable of protecting polling stations and ensure elections are run safely. Video interview with minister
- Zebari announces that providing Saddam with a fair trial is essential for the credibility of the Iraqi government
- Iraqi Al-Ummah Party leader killed in Baghdad by unknown armed men
- Daily flights between Baghdad and Basra to begin day after tomorrow. Archive footage of Baghdad airport
- Unknown armed men kidnap district commissioner of Al-Sharqat near Samarra
- Criminal intelligence officers arrest three criminals who carried out house raids and kidnappings in Baghdad. Video report
- Local firms take over cleaning contracts in Baghdad. Video report
- Three US soldiers injured in Mosul explosion. Video of damaged US military vehicle
- Civil defence officer killed in Baghdad attack today
- Jordanian foreign minister says no evidence that explosion in embassies area of Baghdad targeted Jordanian embassy. Video of damaged buildings
Al-Iraqiah Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic,

- Al-Karradah locals turn out to funeral of slain academic, Hasan al-Rubay'i. Video report covers funeral, comments by his colleagues and students, background about assassinations of Iraqi academics
- Members of criminal gang arrested in Baghdad.
- Seven killed in explosion in Karbala house.
- Multinational force arrests two members from Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi group west of Baghdad
- Representatives of tribes and political figures call for delay of January polls. Video report covers their meeting in Tikrit
- Iraqis want more information about polls
- Studio interview with member of interim National Assembly, Younadem Kana. He speaks about various coalitions to stand election
- Christians celebrate Christmas despite dangerous security situation
- Basra governor congratulates Christians, calls for national unity
- Iraqi Christians living in Damascus celebrate Christmas, pray to save Iraq. Video report
- Pope John Paul II expresses concern over situation in Iraq
- Ban on car imports produced before 2000 to come into effect
- Basra writers association marks 40th anniversary of poet Badr Shakir al-Sayyab...
  Two schools for disabled opened in Al-Samawwa
- Business bulletin. Minister of Oil meets visiting executives of Russian oil firm, Lukoil. Forum held in Baghdad on budget for infrastructure projects

Al-Diyar Satellite Channel in Arabic, Baghdad

- Member of Ummah Party was killed in Baghdad.
- American base comes under mortar attack in Beiji.
- Two Iraqis were killed by American soldiers in Samarra.
- Blast destroys American truck in Mosul
- Many refugees trying to return to Al-Fallujah wait at American checkpoints outside the city in difficult conditions...

Kurdish News, 26 Dec 2004

Iraqi Kurdish leader, US envoy discuss elections, Kirkuk, ties

Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan satellite TV, 26 Dec 04: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Secretary-General Jalal Talabani along with members of the political bureau have received the US Deputy Ambassador to Iraq, James Jeffrey, the US consul in Kirkuk, Peter Thompson.

In a meeting, Talabani extended his gratitude to the US forces and the coalition for liberating Iraq from dictatorship and eliminating terrorism in Kurdistan. Mr Jeffrey, who is currently on a visit to Kurdistan in his capacity as US President George Bush's personal envoy, highlighted the developments witnessed in Kurdistan and addressed the meeting
by saying: You are democratic people, and your areas enjoy a great deal of freedom and stability. And I would like to convey a letter from President Bush, who said: The United States completely supports the elections in Iraq as scheduled for January throughout the country, and continues to develop the ties and cooperation that we have established side by side in an effort to build a democratic, federal, parliamentarian, pluralistic and free Iraq. The US is well aware of the significance of the threat posed by terrorists which needs tireless efforts to confront it. Jeffrey said that President Bush considers the holding of elections the best way to combat terrorism.

**Kurdistan coalition list for elections revealed**

**Kurdistan Satellite TV, Salah-al-Din, in Sorani Kurdish 26 Dec 04:** The Kurdistan Democratic Party Political Bureau secretary, Fadil Mirani, and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Political Bureau member Adnan Mufti held a meeting today in Arbil with a number of Kurdish party representatives. The meeting revealed the Kurdistan coalition list for elections in Iraq. The following is a list of the parties forming the coalition:

- Kurdistan Democratic Party
- Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
- Kurdistan Communist Party
- Kurdistan Islamic Union
- Kurdistan Social Democrat Party
- National Democratic Union of Kurdistan
- Turkoman Democratic Movement of Kurdistan
- Turkoman Cultural Society
- Turkoman National Rally, consists of seven Turkoman parties and independent figures
- Democratic Bayt Nahrayn Party
- Assyrian Democratic Movement
- Chaldean Democratic Union Party
- Chaldean Cultural Society
- Assyrian National Movement,

In addition to two independent Arab figures, whose names have not been revealed.

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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