

Chronology of Events in Iraq, February 2003*

February 1

GOI forces confiscate vehicles. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

The GOI forces confiscated fifteen different vehicles belonging to citizens on the road between Kifri, Tuz and Jalawla. The vehicles were taken away to Qaratapa Administrative Subdistrict by the Ba'athist militia.

February 2

Laws and regulations concerning national security cancelled by Iraqi cabinet. (Iraqi newspaper *Al-Iraq*)

A number of laws and regulations, which were “enacted for national defence reasons under past conditions”, have been cancelled by the Government of Iraq in a recent meeting. These laws are:

Decree No 115 of 1994, which penalized whoever committed the crime of desertion or defaulting, or whoever harboured the deserter or the defaulter, by cutting off his outer ear.

Decree No B/117 of 1994, banning the removal of the tattoo that was etched [on the forehead] for committing a crime that was punishable by cutting off the hand or the ear.

Decree No B/135 of 1998, demanding securities from the one who was convicted of the crime of absence or desertion, and the addition of one-year prison term to the penalty, when the securities were not met.

Decree No B/710 of 1986, withholding the retirement rights of the one pensioned off as a penalty under the provisions of the military retirement law.

Decree No B/5 of 1959 (cancelled).

Revolution Command Council Decree No 1315 of 1984, confiscating the movable and immovable property of, and imprisoning for a period of up to 15 years, whoever declined to sell a commodity at its price, or higher than the price fixed by state departments, the socialist sector, the mixed sector, or any quarter authorized to price commodities. Henceforth, this offence will be subject to the provisions of Article 16 of Trade Regulation Law No. B/20 of 1970, under which the penalty is not more than four years imprisonment.

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Decree No 313 of 1984, imposing the capital punishment on whoever was proven to have engaged in foreign currency smuggling during the glorious Al-Qadisiyah Battle with the Iranian enemy [Iran-Iraq War]. This is after the reasons for its issuance have ceased to exist.

Decree No B/56 of 1994, empowering the leaders of party branches and Local People Councils to shut down shops and detain shopkeepers for violating the declared price list.

Decree No B/70 of 1994, empowering also to detain whoever monopolized, hoarded, or declined to sell commodities similar to those contained in the ration card.

Decree No B/74 of 1994, empowering them to detain whoever engaged in foreign currency dealings outside licensed bureaus.

Following the cancellation of these three decrees, the above-mentioned offences will henceforth be subject to the ordinary legal provisions contained in the Trade Regulation Law.

The official source explained that the laws cancelled included civil laws of a social nature, such as Decree No. B/6 of 2001, which considered killing the wife or woman relative in defence of honour, as an honour crime subject to extenuating circumstances. It also considered the deliberate killing of a person for the sake of feud as punishable by execution. These offences will henceforth be left to the courts to consider the circumstances of each case according to their own discretion and to determine the appropriate sentence for every crime and also any extenuating circumstances, if they existed, in accordance with Article 132 of the Penal Code, which permits the court, to commute sentence whenever it is convinced of that.

Decree No B/402 of 1988, banning courts from considering cases filed against the Health Ministry concerning infectious diseases. The cabinet decision now permits litigation against the Health Ministry on such cases.

Decree No B/1048 of 1978, banning courts from considering cases filed by employees in "Elf-Iraq" Company concerning end of service remuneration, now that the reasons have been removed.

The official source said that the cancellation of Revolution Command Council Decrees Nos. B/30 of 1994 and 5 of 1998, banning the charging of fine or the replacement of the penalty that withheld personal freedom with fine, has given the courts wider freedom to determine the penalty depending on the circumstances of the crime and the criminal so as to insure justice. It also responds to the policy, which seeks to reform the criminal.

February 4

Iraqi Foreign Ministry issues "new" regulations concerning expatriates. (Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

New regulations concerning expatriates are issued:

1. The Iraqi expatriate can obtain the certificate of expatriate citizen after presenting the original copies of the nationality certificate and the identity card or their

photocopies, and in case of not having such documents, he has to present photocopies of documents of his parents inside Iraq such as of his father, brother or uncle. After that the Residence Directorate should issue the certificate of expatriate citizen within two months as of the day of presenting the relevant formality and includes information about bearer and his underage sons and shall stand for the entry visa. Such procedures were carried out within a year or more.

2. Concerning the marriage of the Iraqi who bears a foreign nationality to an Iraqi woman, he is allowed to achieve his marriage procedures inside Iraq. He has to obtain on official letter from the Expatriates and Residents Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed to the Court of Civil Status to achieve marriage procedures within few days.

3. Studying in Iraqi official universities, institutes, and schools for the sons of the bearers of certificate of expatriate citizen is free of charge while sons of the Iraqis who bear a foreign nationality and do not have certificate of expatriate citizen would be admitted to official universities, institutes, and schools with tuition (50) per cent less than that of the non-Iraqis.

4. Concerning the military service for the Iraqis who reside abroad, Iraqi diplomatic missions abroad are currently supplying the Iraqi citizen who resides abroad with a card certifying his proper attitude on military, and states that there is no need for him to go to conscription department in Iraq, and instead, he has just to go to passport department which will spare time and effort for him to spend among his family and relatives during his visit to Iraq.

5. The expatriate citizen (who bears the certificate of the Iraqi expatriate citizen) has the right to enter his country without getting the entry visa. He also has the right to possess a house according to his birthplace and province, and to invest commercial projects inside his country.

As for the latest prisoners amnesty decision, it included citizens who left their country illegally.

February 6

Ba'ath local leader in Diyala killed. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

On the night of 5-6 February, the chief of Gruya clan who was head of Ba'ath party branch in Diyala was killed. The GOI forces arrested 20 citizens and seized their cars. The arrested men had been taken as hostages in the house of the deceased.

February 8

Iraqi Kurdish official assassinated in ambush by Ansar al-Islam. (Agence France-Presse / AFP)

Shaukat Haji Mushir, a leading member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), was killed along with five other people near Halabja [in Qamesh Tapa according to PUK sources] as he met with Ansar al-Islam (Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan, SIK)

members to negotiate their defection. "These Ansar members had volunteered to join us, so Shaukat agreed to meet them. But he walked straight into an ambush," explained PUK field commander Sherkh Jafar during the official's funeral at Sulaimaniya, the PUK's headquarters. Another senior PUK security official was left in a critical condition by the ambush, carried out by three masked Ansar members who managed to flee the scene. The other dead comprised two bodyguards and three civilian bystanders, including a woman and a young boy.

The ambush also came the same day as the Ansar allowed a group of journalists to enter their territory and visit a cluster of buildings shown by Powell during his multimedia presentation. Powell said Ansar were developing chemical weapons at a place called Khormal, although that village is controlled by another Islamic group, Komal-e Islam. The buildings were in fact situated in the Ansar-held village of Sarghat. However, the journalists only found long-abandoned structures and what appeared to be a former media centre, and no evidence of any scientific activity.

February 11

New security measures by the government. (Iraqi Communist Party newspaper *Tariq al-Sha'b*)

New instructions have been issued to the ruling Ba'ath party organizations, forbidding until further notice party members with the rank of team member and higher, at the party sections and branches, from leaving the governorates where they are based, even to visit their families.

Meanwhile, it has been noticed that night patrols by members of the ruling party have been increased in towns and townships, particularly in the governorates close to contact lines with the Kurdistan region, including Misan, Basra, Ta'mim [Kirkuk] and Ninawa.

Decree endorses death penalty for eight new offences in the Air Force. (Iraqi Communist Party newspaper *Tariq al-Sha'b*)

The GOI issued a series of new decrees, including new offences that would carry the death penalty. These instructions were issued by the military bureau of the ruling Ba'ath party and signed by the Iraqi leader's son Qusay Saddam Husayn. The new offences, which carry the death penalty, concern the Air Defence Force personnel. The "Special Court" of the Air Defence Force Command has already received the instructions. They prescribe the death penalty for members of the Air Defence Force units, who:

1. Leave their unit when it is under bombardment;
2. Causes damage to missile-launching bases;
3. Cause damage of ground-air missiles;
4. Upon whom pamphlets, dropped by US planes on military units, are found;
5. Cause damage to power sources, which provide electricity to radar stations and missile-launching bases;
6. Reveal secrets and information on casualties to people outside their unit;

7. Spread rumours within their unit.

The instructions regarding the new offences which carry the death penalty, stipulate the establishment of special committees at the Air Defence Force units, which are in deployment, to define the charges against an accused person.

Decree endorses death penalty for eight new offences in the Air Force. (Iraqi Communist Party newspaper 'Tariq al-Sha'b' and Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

The GOI authorities have repeatedly warned citizens in all towns and cities that in the event of a US attack, no one must leave his home during the day or night. Anyone who breaks the curfew will be dealt with as an American soldier.

Security measures in northern and southern Iraq. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

GOI has established in Kirkuk and all the border areas bordering Kurdish-controlled areas execution and shooting committees for soldiers who may try to escape when the war breaks out or those who refuse to fight. A committee of five people has been established for each regiment to be responsible for carrying out these punishments.

In the last few days, a Saddam Fedayeen patrol has been stationed every 50 metres in Karbala where patrols by other security forces were also formed. Authorities have warned people through loudspeakers that any unusual activity or disobeying of the army's orders will result in shooting them.

February 12

Iraqi Kurdish authorities arrest Turkoman group. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party satellite TV)

A large armed group has been arrested in Arbil city by KDP security authorities. KDP Ministry of Interior alleged that the group was led by the head of the guards command of the Iraqi Turkoman Front, Abd-al-Amir Izzat. The group is accused of preparing for a series of attacks in the region.

Iraqi Turkoman Front newspaper 'Turkomaneli's report on the same news on 16 February: Six members of the Front were arrested by armed men of Arbil internal security. The detainees include the head of the Protection Department of the Turkoman Front, Amir Izzat, along with a group of his body guards, in the morning on the first day of Id al-Adha, who were led to an unknown location.

February 15

Iraqi Kurdish KDP offices opened in Suleimaniya. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

The offices of branch 4 of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was opened in Suleimaniya in an official ceremony attended by representatives from the KDP and the PUK Political Bureaus and former secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party Aziz Muhammad. At the beginning of the ceremony, the head of the KDP's branch 4, Qadir

Jabari delivered a speech, followed by member of the PUK Political Bureau, Umar Sayyid Ali. Later, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Socialist Party Muhammad Haji Mahmud delivered a speech on behalf of other Kurdistan political parties and groups operating in the region.

NGO worker killed in Zakho. (Iraqi Kurdish newspaper *Jamawar*)

A Kurdish employee of Help NGO, Zewar Muhammad Isma'il, was murdered in Zakho town centre in the morning. Later security forces arrested the murderer, Abd-al-Karim Slevani. Prior to the 1991 uprising, the latter was working with the Iraqi intelligence service, and later he was in contact with an Islamic extremist party.

February 17

Iraqi defence minister under house arrest. (UK newspaper *The Guardian*)

Saddam Hussein was reported to have placed his Defence Minister and close relative under house arrest in an extraordinary move apparently designed to prevent a coup. It was reported that the head of the Iraqi military, Lieutenant-General Sultan Hashim Ahmad al-Jabburi Tai, was now effectively a prisoner in his home in Baghdad. An independent source from Baghdad said that al-Jabburi Tai's house and family are surrounded by Saddam's personal guards. The source also claimed that several other high-ranking military and government officials had been arrested in the past few days.

Suspected Islamist armed group arrested in Arbil. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

Kurdistan Democratic Party's Minister of Interior said that the alleged perpetrators of the series of blasts, which occurred last year and before in Arbil, had been located and arrested. At the investigation at Security Investigation Court, the group is said to be led by Baghawan Yasin Abdallah, who is the brother of Mala Salman, searched by KDP security authority. Other alleged members of the band are Jamal Abd-al-Razzaq Ali, Karwan Arif Abdallah, and Nabaz Arif Abdallah.

After establishing the evidence and recording their confessions, the files of the defendants were transferred from Security Investigation Court to the Criminal Court to pronounce its verdict in accordance with the law. They are charged for the following crimes: "1. Carrying out a blast near Bata, next to Pasha Mosque, outside Payam teahouse in Ta'jil District on 12 November 2000; 2. Carrying out a blast at the house of the citizen Dilshad Sabir in Hadid and Khashab District, on 23 August 2002; 3. Carrying out a blast at the house of Mamosta Taj-al-Din in Shorish District on 15 November 2002; 4. Carrying out a blast at Brusk restaurant on 26 June 2002; 5. Carrying out a blast in Iskan District; 6. Attempt to carry out a blast in a house in Azadi District; 7. Attempt to carry out a blast in a hairdressing salon for women.

February 19

Shia forces in Iran moved into northern Iraq. (UK newspaper *Financial Times* and RFE/RL Iraq Report)

An armed force of Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), consisting of 5,000 men, moved some 24 kilometers across the Iranian border into northern Iraq. Iranian officials say the force is there to counter any threats from Baghdad's forces. Iranian sources also said that the U.S. government told SCIRI leader Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim that the SCIRI's military unit, the Badr Corps, should not intervene if there is a U.S. invasion, but the SCIRI would have a role in a democratic Iraq.

Iranian Islamic Student News Agency (ISNA) report of the same news: Iranian government spokesman Abdullah Ramezanzadeh denied reports that Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) military personnel have entered northern Iraq. "We have not had any Iranian or non-Iranian troops crossing Iran's borders with Iraq and I would like to deny the veracity of that report," he said.

February 20

Senior army officers reportedly arrested. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Kurdistani Nuwe*)

Special Security Directorate agencies have, under direct orders from Saddam Hussain's son, Qusay, arrested scores of officers and ranked army officers at Al-Rashid military base in Baghdad; among them Maj Abbas Hashim al-Khaffaji; Capt Yasir Isma'il al-Dulaymi and others. The sources stated that the military doctor Brig-Gen Abd-al-Hadi Ali has been detained at Al-Rashid Hospital.

The authorities also arrested the governor of Kirkuk, Lt-Gen Qays Abd-al-Razzaq Muhammad Jawad al-A'dami, who is now in detention at the Military Intelligence Department's Section-5 in Baghdad. Earlier, the former governor of Kirkuk, Maj-Gen Nawfal Isma'il Khudayri, was also arrested and he is now detained at the Military Intelligence Department in Baghdad..

Radio Tikrit criticizes Saddam. (BBC Monitoring Service)

A station identifying itself as "Radio Tikrit", which was observed on 7 and 8 February to carry programmes and news echoing the Iraqi media and to refer to Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi regime in respectful terms, was observed this week, on 15 and 19 February, to reverse its behaviour and to carry talks that were critical of the Iraqi regime and its leader. Whilst the "Before it is too late" programme on 7 February was critical of the United States and its attempts to build alliances with Arab countries, on 15 and 19 February this programme was sharply critical of Saddam Husayn's Republican Guards and the Public Security Department respectively. Members of the Republican Guards were advised to leave their positions "before it is too late". Likewise, public security officers were advised by the programme on 19 February to refuse the "orders of the tyrant" and "be brave before it is too late". Unlike Iraqi government radios, it was not observed to sign on or off with the Iraqi national

anthem, nor did it play pro-Saddam songs. The station was checked on 15 and 19 February from 1900-2100 gmt, sign-on to sign-off, on 1584 kHz.

February 24

Iraqi government helicopters open fire above Kurdish villages. (Iraqi Kurdish newspaper *Hawlati*)

Four helicopters flew above the villages of Dasht-i Binkurah, Jabal Mirwari and Dakay Haji Ibrahim in de facto Kurdistan administration. In the evening, the GOI forces fired some mortar shells in the direction of the old Mofar village, causing no casualty.

February 25

New Chaldean party licensed to operate in northern Iraq. (Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party newspaper *Brayati*)

In accordance with decree 1236 of the Interior Ministry [KDP-led Kurdistan regional government], a new party under the name the Chaldean Democratic Unity Party [CDUP; Kurdish: Parti Yekyati Demikrati Kildani], was establishment and operation licence. In granting the licence, the Ministry of Interior relied on Act 17 of 1993 on licensing [political] parties.

PUK and Ansar al-Islam reportedly shell each others positions. (Iraqi Kurdish newspaper *Hawlati*)

Ansar al-Islam in Kurdistan (SIK) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan PUK shelled each others positions heavily on the nights of February 23-25 in Hawraman region, using mortars, artilleries and katyusha. The inhabitants of the townships of Biyarah and Tawilah [SIK stronghold], have been recently vacating their houses and leaving for the town of Halabjah and other areas in Sharazur.

February 26

Suspected Islamist blows himself up, kills another in Halabjah. (Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan satellite TV)

An alleged member of Ansar - al-Islam (SIK) blew up himself inside a passenger carrying jeep at the Zamaqi check point in Halabjah in the afternoon. As a result two people were killed, one of whom was a security police officer manning the check point and the other was the driver of the vehicle.

February 28

Iraqi opposition conference elects executive panel. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Hamid al-Bayati of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) has said that members of the Iraqi opposition meeting in Salah Al-Din have elected a six-member executive panel to serve as an "interim leadership" in post-Hussein Iraq.

According to the report, the members are Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK); Mas'ud Barzani of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP); Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim of SCIRI; Ahmed Chalabi of the Iraqi National Congress (INC); Iyad Allawi of the Iraqi National Accord (INA); and Adnan Pachachi, a former foreign minister and an independent Sunni leader, "The Boston Globe" reported. The United States, which has opposed the formation of an interim Iraqi leadership by the opposition in the past, has not commented.

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Revised February 2004*