



The New NCCI website has been launched last week. Then, some small problems might occur. Please inform us at webmanager@ncciraq.org if you experiment any difficulty in accessing the website.

EDITORIAL

Issue 66- 17th May 2007

NCCI WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

Accountability on Assistance and Protection

"Some men see things as they are and say "why?" I dream things that never were and say "why not?"" Georges Bernard Shaw

Nobody can ignore the plight of Iraqis and the lack of protection they face. These days, lots of talks have occurred in Amman regarding the protection issue and we welcome such a step.

Here we may have to step back. What the international humanitarian community means by protection is certainly very far from what Iraqis mean, and, perhaps, even farther than what they need.

Indeed, if you ask an Iraqi about protection, he will certainly reference Kalashnikov, militias, security, etc.

Yet, except advocating for a safer Iraq, respect of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHL), respect of the Rule of Law, end of impunity etc, the kind of security Iraqis are talking about is not in our hands. We can even wonder if any response is in the hands of somebody in today's Iraq.

Actually, according to OCHA¹, protection *"strives to ensure that civilians everywhere will be afforded the basic human dignity each individual deserves"*. Concrete and practical issues for consideration of protection are even identified and listed in the [OCHA aide-memoire](#).

The Inter-Agency Meeting on protection that was held in Amman this week identified 5 areas of protection: Right to life and security, violence during "security operations", Denial of freedom of movement, Impunity and absence of the rule of law, and other violations of IHL.

All these areas are related to the security situation in Iraq and have obvious consequences on the humanitarian situation and daily lives of Iraqis. But as mentioned above, the responses that can be given by the humanitarian community are mainly related to advocacy.

It's a good first step but let's translate it into concrete actions.

Indeed, only advocating for the respect of IHL will not bring water to the people of Samarra who are stuck in the city since days, will not provide food to the inhabitants of Diyala, will not give easier access to people outside of their neighborhoods, and to the hospitals or the schools, to the Baghdadis, nor will it reduce the psychological pressures endured by the children in all tense areas and hot conflict zones across Iraq.

¹ <http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Site=civilians>

There are multiple obstacles to being creative and finding ways to operate; from the on-going violence, to the donors' hindrances; from the limits of mandates, to the difficulties of access.

When Donors request 100% quality, 100% accountability, 100% transparency, should we respond with the Iraqi proverb that says: "Don't look from the key-hole, you either break-open the door or you go away"? Or should we counter that between 0% and 100%, there are 99 other alternatives?

Can we find a grey area, between a stark white and black?

For the past 4 years Iraqis are dying and fleeing the country by the thousands every week. They need protection.

They need active, concrete and immediate assistance now.

Are we ready to provide them this protection?

We should ponder this question considering that even in safe areas we are very often not able to provide them with the rudimentary basics of protection that would make us accountable for our mandate as humanitarian actors.

The situation can be expected to worsen. September is already expected to be one of the bloodiest months in Iraq. Indeed the decision of an eventual extension of the security surge in Baghdad will come to a head, Ramadan is set to occur, and some high political tensions related to the constitution, the Kirkuk matters and the local elections will need to be addressed. It would be fair to assume that the humanitarian needs will worsen at that time.

If we are unable to act properly now, can we expect to be ready in 4 months?

As has been heard this week, we need to find "the links between victims and rescuers".

Humanitarian actors have a great advantage over militias today to protect Iraqis: we are not enrolling the vulnerable, we are not pressuring them, we are not fixing or alienating them to a party, religious group or any other entity, we are not expecting anything from them. That might help to create an environment of trust that will be necessary to improve access, and consequently assistance.

But we have to be concrete now and go forward from the talks.

The whole international community must provide for the people active on the field the adequate means to do everything they can before it is too late. In order to build the confidence of the victims toward the rescuers, and to avoid the rescuers being amongst the victims.

Salaam.
NCCI Team

HUMANITARIAN UPDATES

FROM NCCI, NGOS' REPORTS FROM THE FIELD AND UN AGENCIES

Advocacy

Congressional bill finally addressing Iraqi refugee crisis

Source: [Refugees International](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **May 11, 2007**

Access: **Open**

"Refugees International is concerned that the flood of millions of refugees could export Iraq's instability into the whole region," said Kristele Younes, Advocate with Refugees International. "We are pleased that Congressman Blumenauer and Congresswoman Schakowsky are taking the lead in the House to help the Iraqi people as this crisis continues. It is unconscionable that the State Department has only allowed one Iraqi refugee into the U.S. in April. We sorely need efforts to increase the number of Iraqis who can resettle here." According to statistics from the Department of State's Refugee Processing Center, the U.S. managed to resettle only one individual Iraqi refugee in April. A total of 69 Iraqis were resettled between October 2006 and May 2007.

What Bremer Got Wrong in Iraq

Source: [Washington Post](#) - Nir Rosen

Document: **Opinion**

Date: **May 16, 2007**

Access: **Open**

So I was disappointed by the indignant lack of repentance on full display in his Outlook article on Sunday. In it, the former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority argues that he "was absolutely right to strip away the apparatus of a particularly odious tyranny," including the Baath Party and the Iraqi army. He complains about "critics who've never spent time in Iraq" and "don't understand its complexities." But Bremer himself never understood Iraq, knew no Arabic, had no experience in the Middle East and made no effort to educate himself -- as his statements clearly show. In Bremer's mind, the way to occupy Iraq was not to view it as a nation but as a group of minorities. So he pitted the minority that was not benefiting from the system against the minority that was, and then expected them both to be grateful to him. Bremer ruled Iraq as if it were already undergoing a civil war, helping the Shiites by punishing the Sunnis. He did not see his job as managing the country; he saw it as managing a civil war. So I accuse him of causing one.

Journalists banned from scene of bombings

Source: [Reporters Without Borders](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **May 15, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Reporters Without Borders today voiced concern about the press freedom implications of a decision by the Iraqi interior ministry announced yesterday to prevent journalists from getting access to the scene of bomb attacks. The worldwide press freedom organisation said it feared that growing restrictions on the media could end in a total news blackout.

Operational and Neutral Space

Humanitarian suffering deepens in sieged Iraqi city of Samarra

Source: [Doctors for Iraq](#)

Document: **Statement**

Date: **May 16, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Doctors for Iraq is gravely concerned about the humanitarian and health needs of residents of the Iraqi city of Samarra that has been under siege by US and Iraqi troops for the past two weeks. Doctors for Iraq has received detailed information about the impact of the ongoing military siege on the cities inhabitants. The main hospital in the city which was already short of medical supplies before this latest military operation says it's in urgent need of medication to treat hypertension, diabetes and chronic surgical diseases. Doctors for Iraq has been told the extended hours of curfew especially inside the city itself, the strict and restricted movement of civilians through heavily armed military checkpoints at the cities entrances has severely restricted civilians access to health services. Some inhabitants and local NGOs report a shortage of food and are calling for food supplies to be allowed into the city.

- **Iraqi Journalists and Media Launch National Safety Strategy as Death Toll Climbs**

Source: [International Federation of Journalists](#)

Document: Press Release

Date: May 11, 2007

Access: Open

A conference of media leaders and journalists' unions meeting in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil today called for an end to kidnappings, targeted killings and other threats to media and announced the launching of a National Safety Strategy for Media in the war-torn country. The meeting was called by the International Federation of Journalists and its two affiliated organisations in Iraq and was attended by leading media organisations in the face of a worsening security crisis for media.

 **The National Safety Strategy for Iraqi Media**

- **Pentagon Hopes to Expand Aid Program**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

Legislation Would Help Fund Foreign Governments' Military, Security Forces. Another Iraq initiative the Pentagon wants to expand is the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which remains under discussion with the State Department and is not in the Pentagon draft bill. Begun in Iraq in 2003 with cash seized from Saddam Hussein's government, CERP gives commanders money that they can spend on small construction projects such as rebuilding schools and roads. For fiscal 2008, the Pentagon is seeking \$1 billion to fund the CERP program worldwide.

- **Aide-Memoire for the consideration of Issues Pertaining to the protection of civilians**

Source: [OCHA](#)

Document: Aide-Memoire

Date: April 2004

Access: Open

The Aide Memoire is intended to be a diagnostic tool that reflects evolving protection priorities and assists the Security Council in ensuring that the protection needs and rights of civilians are reflected in relevant resolutions and the mandates of peacekeeping operations. It can also be used in the field as a tool that provides a systematic basis for analysis and reporting during humanitarian crises.

Humanitarian Needs and Assistance

- **Iraq Humanitarian Crisis Situation and NGOs Responses**

Source: [NCCI](#)

Document: Report

Date: May 14, 2007

Access: Open

This Document has the aim, through the last technical documents published by NGOs working in Iraq to update readers on the context and to highlight that, despite of the very unsecured environment and the numerous constraints faced by aid workers on the field, an humanitarian intervention in Iraq is on-going, possible and needed. Affected and vulnerable Iraqis need this support that can be improved with the support of all stakeholders, including the whole international community.

- **Humanitarian briefing on the crisis in Iraq**

Source: [UNAMI](#)

Document: Briefing

Date: May 2, 2007

Access: Open

Iraq's humanitarian emergency requires immediate recognition and support. Above all, it is fundamentally rooted in a protection and human rights crisis, which together are fuelling a climate of lawlessness and impunity with profound consequences for innocent civilians. Indeed, the sheer scale of violence directed against Iraqi civilians is unparalleled to any other emergency in the world today. The provision of basic social services has been severely compromised by insecurity, population movements, brain-drain, and an incremental breakdown of public service infrastructure and systems. Furthermore, families and communities continue to be fractured by conflict and the politics of identity. The sharply deteriorating humanitarian situation over the past few years has yielded a number of devastating indicators

- **Crackdown makes Iraqi city 'unbearable'**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 11, 2007

Access: Open

U.S. and Iraqi troops have imposed a strict security crackdown in Samarra, a stronghold of the Sunni insurgency, prompting residents to complain that basic necessities such as drinking water have not reached the city for seven days. "Life in the city is unbearable," said Mustafa Abdul-Latee, a 38-year-old city worker and father of four. "I get paid on a daily basis, so being unable to work is causing me a big problem.... I am forced to buy in debt from all the shops since I don't have money."

- **Samarra Boiling Over US Curfews**

Source: [Islam Online](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

Locked at homes for days by the frequent US-slapped daylight curfews with no water and only sporadic electricity; residents of Samarra are growing angry at the US occupation forces, saying they have turned their lives into a living nightmare. Samarra residents have also been lacking basic services such as clean water and electricity, which have become a long distance dream for many Iraqis. The director of the city's hospital said four babies had died because there was not enough power to run their incubators. "The hospital has no fuel to run its generators, and this is the fault of the security forces, who have imposed a curfew and forbidden the movement of any person or any vehicle," he said.

- **Thousands flee upsurge in violence in Diyala province**

Source: [IRIN](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 14, 2007

Access: Open

Thousands of Iraqis have been fleeing Diyala province - and others fleeing villages from within the province - over the past week after an increase in attacks by armed groups and a major offensive by US and Iraqi troops. According to the Iraq Red Crescent Society (IRCS), local people are facing an imminent humanitarian tragedy. Most fled their homes with only the clothes they were wearing. The IRCS said it was trying to help the newly displaced but volunteers were having access problems owing to the continued violence.

NGOs, International Organisations and UN Agencies' communication

- **Baghdad NGOs Coordination Meeting - Draft**

Source: [NCCI](#)

Document: Minutes of Meeting

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: **Members**

Minutes of the last NCCI Coordination Meeting held in Baghdad on the 12th of May.

- **Amman NGOs Coordination Meeting - Draft**

Source: [NCCI](#)

Document: Minutes of Meeting

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: **Members**

Minutes of the last NCCI Coordination Meeting held in Amman on the 15th of May.

- **NGOs – OCHA Meeting - Draft**

Source: [NCCI](#)

Document: Minutes of Meeting

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: **Members**

Minutes of the last Meeting held by NCCI between OCHA and NGOs in Amman on the 15th of May.

Health & Mental Health

- **We have none but patience**

Source: [A Family in Baghdad Blog](#)

Document: **Opinion**

Date: **April 30, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Thought the e-mails to the hospitals, I arranged with them how to send the water purifying units for the operating theaters. The doctors usually sent thankful and grateful replies, followed by aid requests, for medicines or medical supplies. I usually apologize, but with time, a load of requests accumulated; mostly similar requests, astonishing me ... For example: everybody wanted Insulin, to treat diabetics for children and adults... I said: there is no organization that can cover these requirements, these requirements should be provided by a government, not an organization... Where is the Iraqi Ministry of Health? Where are the millions of dollars from the general budget allocated for the health sector in Iraq? I don't know, and all the doctors have no answer... Well then; is it bad management, or corruption and thefts... The answer is usually: Both...

- **Assuring quality medicines for the people of Iraq**

Source: [WHO - Iraq](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **May 8, 2007**

Access: **Open**

The Iraqi Ministry of Health (MOH) in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), celebrated on 7 May 2007 the opening ceremony of the newly rehabilitated National Center for Drug Control and Research (NCDCR), also known as the National Drug Control Laboratory (NDQCL, which serves 27 million population.

IDPs

- **Reliving the IDPs of Diyala Governorate**

Source: **IRCS**

Document: **Report**

Date: **May 16, 2007**

Access: **Members**

According to the Iraqi administration, the governorate is considered out of control and the armed groups are totally controlling it and all its neighboring villages and neighborhoods. A matter that led to have the families fleeing to other governorates that are considered relatively secured. The options for those IDPs are now fewer. This time they had to flee to Baghdad which is not that much safer than Diyala and considerably is a HOT HOT Iraqi spot. The IDPs who have fled until 15.05.2007 are (1063 families) from Diyala to Baghdad' neighborhoods have generally gathered in the rest of them are sharing accommodation with host communities.

- **UNHCR seeks urgent health care for Palestinians at Iraq border camp**

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Press release**

Date: **May 15, 2007**

Access: **Open**

UNHCR is highly concerned about living conditions for hundreds of Palestinians stuck at the Al Waleed refugee camp close to Iraq's border with Syria. We are particularly worried about the lack of medical facilities – many of the camp's 942 residents need urgent medical attention, including a mother of seven who suffers from leukaemia and a teenage diabetic boy.

Refugees

- **Iraqi refugees in Iran**

Source: [Boston Globe](#)

Document: **Facts Box**

Date: **May 13, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Iran does not recognize the new Iraqi arrivals as refugees, but the UN High Commission on Refugees considers any Iraqi not from the relatively safe Kurdish north to be prima facie refugees -- meaning it assumes they are legitimately fleeing danger. UNHCR asked Iran last week to accept Iraqi refugees; a Tehran-based Iraqi group that aids refugees wants the government to grant temporary one-year residency permits. So far Iran has not budged, fearing that a million or more Iraqis could flood the country.

- **The Flight From Iraq**
Source: [New York Times Magazine](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 13, 2007
Access: Open

Many of Iraq's neighbors initially welcomed the refugees. These countries were motivated by self-interest as well as by generosity. Certain political refugees, like Baathist officials, who were among the first to leave Iraq, had a political use in negotiations with the American-led occupation and the Iraqi government that succeeded it. And the well-to-do early refugees — those who could meet Jordan's requirement of \$100,000 in the bank to qualify for a residency permit, for example — brought much-needed capital. But the numbers and the welcome became unsustainable. From the Iraqi perspective, the greatest loss has been the flight of the professional class, the people whose resources and skills might once have combined to build a post-Saddam Iraq. It seems, however, that precisely because they are critical to rebuilding Iraq and less prone to sectarianism and violence, professionals are most vulnerable to those forces that are tearing Iraq apart.

 [Video on Iraqi and Palestinian Refugees](#)

- **Boost in fortunes for UNHCR operation near Damascus**
Source: [IRIN](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 15, 2007
Access: Open

"Since January we've registered as many refugees as all of last year and we have the potential for 200,000 this year," Sybella Wilkes, spokesperson for the UNHCR in Damascus, told IRIN. After struggling for years with woeful facilities and a drastically under-funded budget, UNHCR Damascus at last has the money and manpower to cope better with the humanitarian needs of the 1.3 million Iraqi refugees living in Syria. Following January's US\$60 million appeal - and building on April's Geneva international conference - the UNHCR has increased the budget for its Damascus operation from \$700,000 last year to \$16 million this year, giving it spending power of approximately \$12 per Iraqi refugee per year.

Education – Child Protection

- **Child mortality soars because of violence, poor health care**
Source: [IRIN](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 15, 2007
Access: Open

"Never in Iraq's history have so many children died because of diseases and violence. The mortality rate among them has jumped to a level which will require years to be controlled," said Dr Jaffer Ali, a senior official and paediatrician in the Ministry of Health. "In Iraq, children are dying from the easiest curable diseases worldwide like diarrhoea and pneumonia but with the deteriorated health situation in the country, the increase in the number of malnourished children and thousands of displaced living in poverty conditions, the possibility of reducing this high figure is remote," Ali added.

- **Iraq's children between despair and death**
Source: [Truth About Iraqis Blog](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 11, 2007
Access: Open

One in every eight children will not reach the age of five in Iraq. There are no oxygen masks, no medicines for such basic afflictions as diarrhea. There are no doctors in Iraq because the security situation under occupation is such that ALL doctors have been targeted by militia, foreign terrorists and the US military. "According to the report, Iraq's child mortality rate has increased by a staggering 150 percent since 1990. Some 122,000 Iraqi children died in 2005 before reaching their fifth birthday. Consider Iraq's future when you weigh the above statistics to the fact that 60 percent of Iraq's population is comprised of children. Iraq's children not only suffer from malnutrition but have also exhibited severe trauma-based disorders because of the daily violence that has gripped the country since the great war of liberation and democracy.

- **A "protective environment" for Children**

Source: [Uruknet](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 9, 2007
Access: Open

The Inter Parliamentary Union and UNICEF have joined forces in an ambitious project to stop violence against children in every country, which is "widespread and under-acknowledged", according to Toshi Nina, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director. "Governments and parliaments must build a protective environment that allows children to live without threat of abuse and exploitation." This, as the children of Iraq and Afghanistan search in rubbish dumps, for food and items to sell. Violence takes on many forms. The trauma of years of bombings as Iraq (17 years by the US and UK) and Afghanistan (6 years by the US and UK) of homes now being bombed, bulldozed, walled in, of parents being dragged out in the night by the occupying forces and or their puppet "security", as their dwellings are trashed and fathers, brothers, uncles, grandfathers pushed or kicked to the ground, hooded, hog tied, snatched, if not worse.

- **Poverty drives children to work for armed groups**

Source: [IRIN](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 10, 2007
Access: Open

Eleven-year-old Seif Abdul-Rafiz and his two brothers were left with no choice but to leave school and work so as to help their unemployed parents make ends meet. Unable to find a job, Seif resorted to making bombs for Sunni insurgents who are fighting US troops in Iraq.

- **Educational standards plummet, say specialists**

Source: [IRIN](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 16, 2007
Access: Open

Education specialists in Iraq say they are concerned that pupils and students in the current academic year will leave school without completing this year's curriculum, and new graduates will not be competent to pursue their careers.

Human Rights

- **A conspicuous silence on Iraq**

Source: [Boston Globe](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 13, 2007
Access: Open

Yet one group of voices has been mute: the West's leading human rights organizations. These organizations have no public position on whether US troops should stay or go and on whether the "surge" of troops can help restrain the escalating bloodshed. But there is an air of unreality to some of these proposals. No morally pure cavalry stands ready to pull Iraq back from the brink. However worthwhile international prosecutions might be, they are unlikely to snap the cycle of violence, just as they have failed to do so in Darfur. As the United States careens toward a new Iraq policy, human rights experts must bring their insight to bear. The debate on whether to stay or go should not happen without the input of those Westerners who are most concerned with the fate of the Iraqi people.

- **New Detainees Strain Iraq's Jails**

Source: [Washington Post](#)
Document: Article
Date: May 15, 2007
Access: Open

The capture of thousands of new suspects under the three-month-old Baghdad security plan has overwhelmed the Iraqi government's detention system, forcing hundreds of people into overcrowded facilities, according to Iraqi and Western officials. Estimates of those inside Iraqi facilities, where reports of beatings and torture are common, vary widely because detainees are dispersed among hundreds of locations run by different ministries. The U.S. military holds detainees at two main centers, Camp Bucca in southern Iraq and Camp Cropper near Baghdad, and officials say they are committed to avoiding the abuses that occurred at the Abu Ghraib prison following the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

IRAQ CONTEXT

THROUGH SOME GENERAL REPORTS AND ARTICLES

General Overview

- **Iraq Crisis Report (IraqHAR)**

Source: [Centre of Excellence on Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance](#)

Document: **Weekly report**

Date: **May 16, 2007**

Access: **Open**

A weekly Iraq humanitarian assistance report Compiled by Pacific Disaster Management Information Network

- **Juan Cole's informed comment's excerpts**

Source: [Informed Comment - Juan Cole's Web Blog.](#)

Document: **Selection of daily comments**

Date: **May 11-17, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Juan Cole is a Professor of Modern Middle East and South Asian History at the University of Michigan. As such he brings daily much needed expertise and historical perspective to issues surrounding Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Good reading to have a weekly review of the Iraq daily situation.

Non-Violence and Reconciliation

- **Cultural Festival for Dialogue and Reconciliation**

Source: [Iraqi Association](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **May 13, 2007**

Access: **Members**

The activities of the Cultural Festival to promote the dialogue and reconciliation was conducted by an Iraqi Association on 3rd of May 2007. This is part of their program "Dialogue culture to promote national reconciliation".

- **Impediments to National Reconciliation in Iraq**

Source: [Council on Foreign Relations](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 5, 2007**

Access: **Open**

National reconciliation between Iraq's ethno-religious communities is seen as a necessary precursor to stemming the country's sectarian violence. But its prospects look bleak. The trial and execution of Saddam Hussein, which was originally billed as an exercise in reconciliation, instead only inflamed sectarian tensions. Iraq's factions also remain deadlocked over the distribution of oil revenues, issues of federalism, and the ethnic makeup of the Iraqi government. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's cabinet is seen by Iraq's Sunni Arabs as a puppet-state of Shiite militias, which by extension are seen as puppets of Tehran. Unless efforts at national reconciliation can convince Iraqi Sunnis to buy into a power-sharing agreement, experts expect a continuation of the current levels of internecine violence.

- **'The cultivation of life'**

Source: [Asia Times](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **May 11, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Popular wisdom in Iraq rules that Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, with a simple fatwa, or even a single word, could bring the US occupation to an abrupt end. So why doesn't he? Roubaie candidly admitted, "There are differences among the marjas. Some think it's better for the Americans to stay, otherwise there will be civil war. Others think they should leave. There is no united opinion." Roubaie explained why Sistani cannot issue a fatwa to get rid of the occupation: "He doesn't have such a privilege, he knows that a lot of people would die. The only one who would have such a privilege is Imam Mahdi." As the Prophet Mohammed and the Imam Mahdi (prophesied redeemer of Islam) "are not situated in real life now and are thinking about more important things", it's unlikely Sistani will directly tell President George W Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney to pack up and go.

Human Living Conditions

- **At Social Club for Baghdad's Elite, Escape Is a Weekly Game of Bingo**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

A few dozen members of this city's privileged classes chatted on fraying armchairs at the Alwiyah Club on a recent Saturday, waiting for the weekly bingo game to start. The caller usually responsible for yelling out English letters and Arabic numbers -- "B-sabaa!" for B7 -- had not shown up since his sister was abducted and slain a few weeks before. But at this colonial-era social club, one of the last oases for the Baghdad elite, bingo is never canceled. "We insist, so that people can always say, 'There is bingo,'" said Faris al-Douri, the club's secretary general. "We tried to save what we could save."

- **The Iraq war, MTV-style**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

The reality show 'Hometown Baghdad' has a worldwide audience, but watching it there is another story. There's no tribal council or immunity challenge. Viewers don't vote off their least favorite. But reality TV has come of age in Iraq with a new show about some well-spoken twentysomethings who share their lives, fears and dreams as cameras follow them around one of the world's most dangerous cities. "When a bombing happens in another city, it's a big deal," he said. "When it happens here, people [in the rest of the world] are used to it. They think, 'OK, so another 100 people died.' We are trying to show the suffering here from a different side of the story. We are trying to show that we are normal people, just like everyone else."

- **Baghdad market reopens after latest bombing**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

Mussa resigned himself to coming back to the decades-old commercial center. He had gone home in shock the previous night and awakened in the morning afraid he would not survive the next attack. But with a wife, children and parents to feed, he didn't have the luxury of shutting down. "What else could I do?" he said numbly. "I don't have a degree in anything, and even then, what's the difference? People are dying indiscriminately regardless of where they are in Baghdad!"

Violence

- **Maps of War**

Source: [Electronic Iraq](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

The map shows recent attacks and military operations. And if you want to monitor the progress of the sectarian partitioning of the city, you can click "SUNNI AREAS" and watch much of the area west of the Tigris turn pink. Click "SHIITE AREAS" and watch much of the area east of the Tigris turn blue. For the purpose of visualizing the violence in the country, it's a very useful map. This was my first thought: what a useful map. Then I thought of my friend. I won't show him this map. There would be tears. There have been enough tears already.

- **Collateral Genocide**

Source: [Counterpunch](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 11, 2007

Access: Open

Wrecking Iraq: One Million Dead, 2 Million Wounded, 3 Million Displaced. Of course our government didn't intend to commit genocide, it just sort of happened. The Iraqis kept getting in the way while we were trying to complete the mission. Mistakes were made as we were building democracy, but surely no genocide was intended. After all, we are the international deciders of what is and what isn't genocide, and we know full well that intent is a requirement. It was only "collateral genocide" and lord knows we did our very best to avoid it.

- **Disappeared without a trace: more than 10,000 Iraqis**

Source: [McClatchy](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

Over the past four years, as sectarian kidnappings and killings have gripped Iraq and U.S. forces have arrested untold numbers in an effort to pacify the country, tens of thousands of Iraqis have vanished. There's no accurate count of the missing since the war began. Iraqi human rights groups put the figure at 15,000 or more, while government officials say 40 to 60 people disappeared each day throughout the country for much of last year, a rate equal to at least 14,600 in one year. What happened to them is a frustrating mystery that compounds Iraq's overwhelming sense of chaos and anarchy. Are they dead? Were they kidnapped or killed in some mass bombing? Is the Iraqi government or some militia group holding them? Were they taken prisoner by the United States, which is holding 19,000 Iraqis at its two main detention centers, at Camp Cropper and Camp Bucca?

- **"Honour Killing" Sparks Fears Of new Iraqi Conflict**

Source: [IWPR](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

The Yezidi minority has so far stayed well out of Iraq's internecine battles, but violence with their Muslim neighbours has escalated following the murder of a girl who apparently converted to Islam. In the complex political context in Mosul and the surrounding Nineveh region, speculation is rife that Duaa's murder was really a plot by one of Iraq's political factions. Some of the conspiracy theories seem to be coming from opposing factions seeking to capitalise on the incident. These theories abound despite the fact that the suspects are all relatives of the dead woman, rather than outsiders.

Reconstruction is not going so well...for Iraqis

- **Billions in Oil Missing in Iraq, U.S. Study Says**

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 12, 2007

Access: Open

Between 100,000 and 300,000 barrels a day of Iraq's declared oil production over the past four years is unaccounted for and could have been siphoned off through corruption or smuggling, according to a draft American government report.

- **Defense Skirts State in Reviving Iraqi Industry**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 14, 2007

Access: Open

Paul Brinkley, a deputy undersecretary of defense, has been called a Stalinist by U.S. diplomats in Iraq. Brinkley and his colleagues at the Pentagon believe that rehabilitating shuttered, state-run enterprises could reduce violence by employing tens of thousands of Iraqis. Officials at State counter that the initiative is antithetical to free-market reforms the United States should promote in Iraq. The bureaucratic knife fight over the best way to revive Iraq's moribund economy illustrates how the two principal players in the reconstruction of Iraq -- the departments of Defense and State -- remain at odds over basic economic and political measures. The bickering has hamstrung initiatives to promote stability four years after Saddam Hussein's fall.

- **Iraqis encounter passport roadblocks**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

New rules have thrust millions into a nightmare of red tape at a time when many are desperate to flee. Clerks at the final two windows formally accepted the finished packages and handed Allawchi receipts for them, along with a date on which the passports were to be ready: March 28. The process had cost about \$80, plus what Allawchi paid to make copies. That's far less than what it would have cost had he paid someone to speed things up. Brokers are charging \$500 or more per application, about twice the average monthly salary in Iraq. And the price is growing with demand, Iraqis say.

- **State of Surge: Bush's Pacification Plan Has Failed; It Will be a Long War**

Source: [Counterpunch](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 12, 2007

Access: Open

Peace, when it finally comes to Iraq, will inevitably be the result of a package deal of which a timetable for a US withdrawal is likely to be a central part. Despite Mr Cheney's claim that the US still seeks victory in Iraq--American failure--going by its original high ambitions--has long been inevitable. Iran and Syria are important players in Iraq that cannot be ignored. The popularly elected Shia-Kurdish government cannot be remade at Americans and British request because it does not go along with their wishes. The Sunni insurgency is not going out of business or even showing signs of being seriously weakened. The economy is in ruins. President Bush's strategy, announced in January, of confronting Iran and seeking to pacify Baghdad by sending US troop reinforcements is not working.

- **Why Iraqis Cannot Agree on an Oil Law**

Source: [Council on Foreign Relations](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 9, 2007

Access: Open

Disagreements over oil and revenue sharing threaten to unravel hopes for a political breakthrough and national reconciliation in Iraq. A draft oil law has drawn criticisms from Iraq's Sunnis, who prefer a stronger role for the central government, and from Kurds, who prefer a stronger role for the regional authorities. The majority Shiites have sought to mollify the Sunnis by keeping control of Iraq's oil sector in Baghdad, not the provinces. The role of outside investors, as well as the classification of old versus new oil fields, also divides Iraqi politicians. Oil, of course, is the country's most vital resource, accounting for 95 percent of government revenue. Yet output has fallen well short of Baghdad's production targets, mostly due to corruption, poor security, and lack of investment.

- **Rebuilding Iraq: Integrated Strategic Plan Needed to Help Restore Iraq's Oil and Electricity Sectors**

Source: [US Government Accountability Office](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

Since 2003, the United States has provided several billion dollars in reconstruction funds to help rebuild Iraq oil and electricity sectors, which are crucial to rebuilding Iraq's economy. The U.S. rebuilding program was predicated on three key assumptions: a permissive security environment, the ability to restore Iraq's essential services to prewar levels, and funding from Iraq and international donors. This report addresses (1) the funding made available to rebuild Iraq's oil and electricity sectors, (2) the U.S. goals for these sectors and progress in achieving these goals, and (3) the key challenges the U.S. government faces in these efforts. This report recommends that the Iraqi government, not the U.S. government, is responsible for taking action on GAO's recommendations. GAO believes that these recommendations are still valid given the billions made available for Iraq's energy sector and the U.S. government's influence in overseeing Iraq's rebuilding efforts.

 [The Full Report](#)

- **Interim Report on the Surge in Iraq**

Source: [Brookings Institution](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 11, 2007

Access: Open

That said, on balance it is hard to view the surge as a success to date. Two major problems stand out. As a result of these two unfavorable trends, many derivative problems and challenges remain largely intractable thus far. As the Pentagon's special investigator has just confirmed in his latest quarterly report, Iraq's economy remains mediocre at best. The combination of oil revenue and foreign aid, together with last year's wise reforms of overly generous consumer subsidies, mean that federal coffers are in good shape. But even if there is money to spend, it is not being spent, and certainly not being spent well. A combination of violence, corruption, and federal interference in the efficient flow of some funds straight to provincial governments is impeding progress. Utility performance remains stuck around Saddam Hussein levels at best, for most things (besides telephone and internet access, which are way up). Schools are not functioning well and health infrastructure is in even worse shape. Unemployment remains mired in the 30-plus percent range. None of this is surprising in light of the security picture, but it is disheartening nonetheless.

- **The Iraqi Kurdish Question**

Source: [Council on Foreign Relations](#)

Document: Article

Date: April 23, 2007

Access: Open

A recent war of words between Turkish officials and Iraq's Kurds has revived concerns of a cross-border conflict in northern Iraq, the most peaceful part of the country. The head of Turkey's military recently threatened an invasion of the region to clear it of pro-independence Kurdish rebels who are offered sanctuary by the local government. Ankara also fears an independent Iraqi Kurdistan might further encourage separatism among Turkey's own sizeable Kurdish population. A major bone of contention remains the unsettled status of Kirkuk, an ethnically mixed city in northern Iraq whose large oil fields are coveted by many groups. An upcoming referendum, slated for late 2007, on the city's status has drawn protests from Turkish and Arab governments.

- **Second British Firm Bids for Iraq Security Contract**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 13, 2007

Access: Open

The British company ArmorGroup International has emerged as one of the bidders for what is believed to be the largest U.S. security contract in Iraq, posing a challenge to another British firm that currently holds the job and is vying for the new contract, according to sources familiar with the matter.

Iraqi Political process

- **Iraq's Tyranny of the Majority**

Source: [Council on Foreign Relations](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 11, 2007

Access: Open

Iraqi Sunnis are feeling the pinch of what political scientists call "tyranny of the majority." Efforts at national reconciliation have stalled (RFE/RL) over a series of constitutional demands made by Sunni leader Tariq al-Hashimi, whose minority party, the Iraq Accord Front, controls forty-four seats in parliament (Sunni Arabs comprise roughly 20 percent of Iraq's population). He has called for a breakup of Iraq's Shiite militias; a reversal of laws preventing former Baath Party members from taking government jobs; stronger constitutional language affirming the sanctity of the Iraqi state to avoid further decentralization; and a hydrocarbons law, explained in this new Backgrounder, which redistributes revenues more equitably. After a pair of meetings with Iraq's president and prime minister, Hashimi appears to have backed away (CNN) from earlier threats to pull his bloc out of parliament if his demands go unmet.

- **Majority of Iraqi Lawmakers Now Reject Occupation**

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 9, 2007

Access: Open

On Tuesday, without note in the U.S. media, more than half of the members of Iraq's parliament rejected the continuing occupation of their country. 144 lawmakers signed onto a legislative petition calling on the United States to set a timetable for withdrawal, according to Nassar Al-Rubaie, a spokesman for the Al Sadr movement, the nationalist Shia group that sponsored the petition. Reached by phone in Baghdad on Tuesday, Al-Rubaie said that he would present the petition, which is nonbinding, to the speaker of the Iraqi parliament and demand that a binding measure be put to a vote. Under Iraqi law, the speaker must present a resolution that's called for by a majority of lawmakers, but there are significant loopholes and what will happen next is unclear.

- **Iraq's top Shi'ite party changes platform**

Source: [Reuters](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 12, 2007

Access: Open

Iraq's biggest Shi'ite party on Saturday pledged its allegiance to the country's top Shi'ite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, in a move that would distance it from Shi'ite Iran where it was formed. The Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said it had introduced significant policy changes and changed its name to the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) -- dropping the word "Revolution".

- **Whatever happened to Ahmed Chalabi? (the man whose lies about WMDs took us to war)**

Source: [The Independent](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 16, 2007

Access: Open

He is the great survivor of Iraqi politics, still flexing his muscles in the wreckage of Baghdad despite the infamous part he played in the ill-fated US invasion. Patrick Cockburn caught up with him

Policies and Strategies

- **The Madness of the War Profiteering in Iraq**

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: Testimony

Date: May 10, 2007

Access: Open

"Iraq for Sale" director Robert Greenwald explains to Congress that the billions that defense contractors and war profiteers are making out of the Iraq war is a madhouse run amuck.

He saw Halliburton advertising a job for truck drivers in Iraq and he signed up. When Shane started telling me that empty trucks were being driven across dangerous stretches of desert, I assumed he was mistaken. Why would they do that? Then he explained that Halliburton got paid for the number of trips they took, regardless of whether they were carrying anything. These unnecessary trips were putting the lives of truckers at risk, exposing drivers and co-workers to attack. This was the result of cost-plus, no-bid contracts.

- **Keeping the Lid On Iraq's Civil War**

Source: [Brookings Institution](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 7, 2007

Access: Open

If the surge fails, it is imperative that the United States have a plan for containing the Iraqi civil war. As painful as it may be to admit that the U.S. effort to bring peace and stability to Iraq has failed, our new priority must become preventing the Iraqi conflict from spilling over and destabilizing neighboring states. This will not be easy. In fact, the history of states trying to contain the "spillover" from civil wars suggests that it will be very hard for the United States to do so. But planning now may allow the United States to mitigate spillover's worst effects. The collapse of Iraq into all-out civil war would mean more than just a humanitarian tragedy that could easily claim hundreds of thousands of Iraqi lives and produce millions of refugees.

- **The contractor surge in Iraq**

Source: [The Huffington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 9, 2007

Access: Open

The Washington Post had a front page article on Wednesday describing the extent and timeline for surging the troops. Besides planning to surge up to 35,000 troops, the DOD wants the flexibility to keep the surge going until Spring 2008. There has been talk about what to do about Iraq and the surge in September of this year, but there is the chance that this surge will last a year. What the Army is not telling you is that we will also be surging the contractors.

- **After the Surge: The Case for U.S. Military Disengagement from Iraq**

Source: [Council on Foreign Relations](#)

Document: Report

Date: February 2007

Access: Open

After the Surge: The Case for U.S. Military Disengagement from Iraq is premised on the judgment that the United States is not succeeding in Iraq and that Iraq itself is more divided and violent than ever. It concludes that the administration's decision to increase U.S. force levels will fail to prevent further deterioration in the situation—and that there is no alternative policy with the potential to turn things around. As a result, Simon urges the United States to disengage militarily from Iraq, a disengagement that in his view should involve a negotiated accord with Iraq's government, a dialogue with Iraq's neighbors, and new diplomatic initiatives throughout the region. Simon argues that if the United States does all this, it can minimize the strategic costs of its failure in Iraq and even offset these losses in whole or in part.

- **Tagging Iraq: Samarra's graffiti war**

Source: [Kuwait Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 10, 2007

Access: Open

The young vandal is an army translator whom the soldiers call Matthew-publishing his real name would put him in danger. Matthew is charged with sowing seeds of strife between the town's two main insurgent groups, Al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Islamic Army of Iraq.

- **U.S. Embassy employees fearful over Green Zone attacks**

Source: [McClatchy](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 16, 2007

Access: Open

U.S. Embassy employees in Iraq are growing increasingly angry over what they say are inadequate security precautions in the heavily fortified Green Zone, where recent mortar and rocket attacks have claimed the lives of six people, including two U.S. citizens. Last week, Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, told reporters in Washington after a visit here that conditions inside the zone were "infinitely worse" than she'd experienced during a visit last year. On May 3, the embassy warned Green Zone residents to keep outdoor travel to a minimum and "remain within a hardened structure to the maximum extent possible and strictly avoid congregating outdoors." The message ordered individuals "whose place of duty is outside a hardened structure or traveling a substantial distance outdoors" to wear bulletproof vests and helmets "until further notice."

HUMANITARIAN WORLD PERSPECTIVES & QUALITY OF AID

THROUGH ARTICLES AND REPORTS

- **Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls 2007**

Source: [Plan International](#)

Document: Report

Date: May 15, 2007

Access: Open

Millions of girls are being condemned to a life of inequality and poverty according to a new report from Plan. 'Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls', highlights the appalling situation in which girls find themselves - sometimes through poverty, sometimes because they are young but often simply because of their gender. The report is the first in a series of global reports on girls to be published over the next nine years by Plan. Timed to be released on the United Nation's International Day of the Family, 'Because I am a Girl' raises awareness of the threats and broken promises that blight the lives of millions of girls. The report presents global statistics highlighting the scale of the problem. For example: 62 million primary school-aged girls are not in education; childhood malnutrition has led to stunted growth in an estimated 450 million women; more young girls aged 15 to 19 years die from unsafe abortions and birth complications than from any other cause; more than 100 million girls, some as young as 12, are expected to marry over the next decade despite international legislation outlawing early marriages.

 **[The Full Report](#)**

[This Page is your page](#)

If you have an announcement (training, workshop, etc) regarding your organisation, if you are aware about meetings, events, humanitarian update, if you would like to make known some information, please send them to webmanager@ncciraq.org

[Weekly Schedule](#)

There is an NCCI Coordination Meeting in Erbil on Sunday 20th at 10 am.
We have added on our [weekly schedule](#) some events hold in Iraq or Jordan. that concern only specific invited people. They are highlighted as “restricted”. This is to give better information on what is going on to our members. We encourage you to check regularly our Weekly Schedule on our **Website** for updates.

[Upcoming important dates](#)

19th May: Battle of Mo'taa and killing of Jaffar Al-Taiar. Shia pilgrims should be expected to go to his shrine in Kerak, Jordan.

22nd May: Birthday of Zaynab (Imam Ali's daughter). Shia Pilgrims expected to go to her shrine in Damascus or to gather in Kerbala

[Updates & Announcements](#)

ToT Sphere

A Sphere training of trainer will be held in Arabic in Amman from 20th to 28th of June 2007. This course aims to prepare individuals to promote learning on applying the Sphere handbook, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, as a tool for improving the quality and accountability of humanitarian action, through sharing experience and practicing. Applications should be sent before the 20th of May 2007.

" _____ "

..

:

:

afbh@yahoo.com

(_____)

:

-.117 +9626 5651860
+9626 4740955

[NCCI's Contact List](#)