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# MESOPOTAMIAN TIMES

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*The Mesopotamian Times is a daily compilation of articles from local Arabic media by the J3 Ops Support's Linguist Support Cell.*

## RADIO

### 1. Maysan security meeting

Fadhel Nea'mah Hussein, Deputy Chairman of the Maysan Security Committee announced that Maysan Provincial Council held a closed meeting to discuss the memorandum for the security handover from the British Forces. The memorandum is similar to those for Dhi Qar and Nasariya Provinces, but the Council said that Maysan is a different case because it is located near the Iranian border. A delegation from the Maysan Council met a delegation from the British Forces outside the province to amend the memorandum and to agree about changes.

### 2. Updates with killing a policeman, police statements

A policeman was killed and 13 civilians were wounded on Tuesday in cross-fire during clashes between British forces and gunmen in western Basra, a media source in Basra police department said.

"A British patrol was attacked by gunmen on Tuesday afternoon near to the police station in Al-Qibla region in eastern Basra," the source, who asked not to be named, told the independent news agency Voices of Iraq (VOI).

"The forces started a shootout with the attackers that left a policeman dead and 13 civilians with injuries," he added.

Two gunmen and a policeman were injured and two suspected armed men were arrested during clashes between British forces and gunmen in western Basra, the Multi-National forces had said earlier.

"British forces launched a crackdown operation on Tuesday afternoon in Al-Qibla region in western Basra to search for illegal weapons," the Multi-National forces in Basra said in a statement received by the independent news agency Voices of Iraq (VOI).

"Clashes flared up between British forces and gunmen, leaving two armed men and a policeman injured," the statement added.

"Two suspected gunmen were arrested in the operation after firing a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) against British forces," it noted.

3. Nasariya, Apr 11, (VOI) - Under the slogan, 'For a creative Iraqi culture,' the events of the 3rd Al-Habobi Poetry Festival began on Tuesday in Dhi-Qar province. Co-organized by the University of Dhi-Qar and the Union of Writers and Authors, the festival is due to run for three days.

4. Nádhim Al Jabri Media Director for Basra Provincial Council requested that the people of Basra support the projects carried out by BPC. He urged

them to help solve the current surge in violence through speech and dialogue. People were also urged to report any problems or failures in workmanship in the construction and redevelopment projects.

Al Marbed

5. Maysan electricity directorate claimed that the storms of Tuesday had caused disruption of power supplies in Maysan. Pylons between Basra and Maysan had collapsed leaving large parts of the province without electricity.

Al Marbed

**6. Press conference regarding the deaths in Al Qibla**

Hakeem Al Mayaahi, the chief of the security committee for Basra Provincial Council said today, during a press conference held in the Basra governate this morning that, the total number of people killed in Al Qibla was three, 2 civilians and one IPS officer, when the British forces surrounded an area in Al Qibla with tanks and then carried out a strike on a house. He stated that the way the British forces carried out the strike was excessive and inhumane. They destroyed doors and windows and scared children and women, before randomly opening fire which resulted in 3 martyrs. He added that it was a very dangerous action from the British forces because this treatment has caused upset amongst the people of Basra. The British forces have now randomly opened fire two times.

Al Marbed

**TELEVISION**

NSTR

**NEWSPAPERS**

No newspapers today

**INTERNET**

**7. Basra province stops work on construction projects due to the lack of correct specifications.**

Head of the construction and development committee in the Basra council said on Thursday that, the province has stopped worked on some of the projects because of a lack of correct specifications. Civilians have been invited to observe the work in some of the projects which are being implemented in the province. Ghaali Najim, head of the committee added that, "Work has stopped on paving the roads of Al Basra – Al Zubayr. 10km long, also work has stopped in the paving projects in Al Raafideen in the centre of the town due to the lack of correct specifications.

Also, Basra Provincial Council issued a statement requesting all civilians to report any wrong doings of the local companies working on the construction, which is being carried out in the province. The government has allocated 246 billion dinar as a budget for developing the area through construction projects in Basra. The local government requested that the amount should be increased to 400 billion dinar because of the importance of these projects to

the civilians of Basra but the central government has not responded to the requests of the local government.

**8. 8 million ID allocated to projects for cleaning Basra.**

An official from Basra Provincial Council said today, Wednesday, that 8 million ID has been allocated to projects to clean specific locations and general areas in Basra Province from the Development and Reconstruction Budget for 2007. The Deputy Chairman of the Provincial Council, Naseef Jaasim Al-'Abaadee, said to this independent news agency (VOI) that "this sum was allocated from the special budget to the Basra municipality sector."

The projects will be carried out in the following areas: Al-Aman Al-Saadeq, Hay Al-Hussein, Al-Qibla, Hay Al-Jahaad, Al-Mufaqqiya and Al-Jamhuriya..... in addition to the departments for the districts of Umm Qasr, Al-Faw, Al-Medina, Al-Nashoua, Al-Qurna, Shatt Al-Arab and Al-Deer.

**9. Casualties from Basra fighting rises to three dead and nine injured.**

A spokesman from Basra IPS said today, Wednesday, that the final total for the number of victims of the fighting which happened between a British patrol and gunmen west of the city last night rose to three dead from the gunmen and police and nine civilians injured.

The spokesman added to this independent news agency (VOI) today that "The fighting which happened yesterday evening, Tuesday, between a British patrol and gunmen took place close to the Al-Qibla Police Station, he revealed that one of the dead was from another police station, and nine civilians were injured in the random fire between the two parties."

He stated that "Two of the casualties were serious, and they were taken to hospital."

The spokesman did not make clear if there were any casualties amongst the British patrol.

A security source in Basra IPS said to VOI yesterday evening that a policeman died and 13 civilians were injured by random fire, caused by the fighting between British forces and gunmen near to the Al-Qibla Police Station, 8 km west of Basra city.

A press statement from MND (SE) yesterday said that confrontations happened on Tuesday afternoon between armed elements and a British patrol "Which was conducting a search operation in the Al-Qibla district to search for illegal weapons, and prevent criminal activities."

It confirmed that the fighting resulted in "Two gunmen injured and one policeman and two suspects were arrested" without mentioning the injured civilians.

**10. Basra Provincial Council agrees to Water Projects for 2007.**

The Chairman of the Water Sector in the Basra Provincial Council said that the Provincial Council agreed today, Wednesday, to a plan for a water project for 2007 from the Development and Reconstruction Budget.

Dr Hamad Al-Thaalmeel stated to this independent news agency (VOI) that "The cost of this project is 31.5 million ID and includes projects in the city centre and districts and the areas adjacent to them."

He added "The project includes developing the network in Shatt Al-Arab by 1000 m3 and a Shatt Al-Arab central water project, a water project near the west of Basra, a chlorine treatment facility in Abu Al-Khaseeb, improving the Al-Shaiba network by building four water centres with a capacity of a million gallons a day."

"In addition to materials and equipment to repair and maintain the entire water network and replace pumps of the Al-Mouafaqiya project and improve the Hay Al-Hussein projects with a pre-treatment water centre for the Al-Jubaila project and provide and install six units to provide a million gallons of water per day.

"The projects will include the establishing of additional stations for Al-Basra central and support for the projects in the centre of Basra and provide and run a network in the city centre and the other districts and boroughs."

He stated that "The Provincial Council will agree to all projects for 2007 during the next few days".

The Basra Provincial budget guaranteed 246 million ID to the Development and Reconstruction Budget for 2007.

#### **11. Handing over of the security responsibility in Maysan**

A media spokesman for the Iraqi Army in Basra said today, Thursday, that the coming week will see the handing over of the security file for Maysan Province from MNF to the Iraqi Army.

Brigadier Abbas Al-Timimi, media spokesman for the Iraqi Army in Basra, during a telephone call today with the independent news agency Aswaat Al-Iraq, said "on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2007, the security file will be handed over completely from MNF to the Iraqi Army."

Al-Timimi stated that the Iraqi forces "Are fully ready to receive the security responsibility from the MNF, and also ready to do their duty to ensure the security."

He clarified that the Iraqi forces "Iraqi forces will receive Shaiba base, 40 km west of Basra, from MNF on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2007."

The Governor of Maysan, A'adel Muhudur Rathee, has said that the Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, and the Ministers of the Interior and Defence and senior Iraqi officials will attend the ceremonies for receiving the security responsibility from the British forces, which is anticipated to be at the end of this month.

Rathee indicated that there will be "a parade and celebrations" on the day of the receipt of the security responsibility.

He added "We also have contacts with the British forces regarding this ceremony on the day of the receipt of the security responsibility, in clarifying the extent of British forces movement within the province and the extent of cooperation between the two parties, as well as a robust security plan being implemented in the province on the day of the parade."

The Prime Minister of Iraq has announced recently that Maysan Province will receive the duty of the security responsibility soon from the British forces and by then there will be three provinces which have received the security responsibility, after Al-Muthanna and Dhi Qar provinces.