

# AMERICAN CONTRACTOR

## Newsletter

30 January 2009

### Iraq Information & Other Topics

### Iraq Dates

- 4 March 2010 Early voting of Parliamentary Elections
- 7 March 2010 Iraq Parliamentary Elections
- 1 April 2010 U.N. Report by the Secretary-General on Iraq
- 15 April 2010 Iraq Investment Conference - Istanbul, Turkey
- June 2010 U.N. Tarsov Mandate Extended
- Oct 2010 National Census (rescheduled from Oct 2009)

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## Political Developments

As predicted some of the names who had been previously barred from participating in the upcoming elections have been re-instated by the government Accountability and Justice Committee (AJC). 54 members have submitted the documents exonerating them of any ties to the previous regime Saddam Ba'ath party loyalists. So, 54 names are allowed to participate in the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

The 2010 federal budget law was not on the schedule on 25 Jan, due to lack of quorum from the Iraqi Parliament members. It appears some Parliament do not want to show up for the voting session on pending legislative bills to include the 2010 federal budget law. As I have said previously most if not all Parliament members will not be voted back into office and have a lack of participation in legislative matters. On 26 Jan, Tuesday, the Parliament had scheduled a vote on the 2010 federal budget, and have passed the 2010 federal budget law.

The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) have opened offices in neighboring countries where Iraqi's living abroad are able to participate in the Iraq elections. The countries are Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Iran, Lebanon and more countries will be in line as IHEC personnel are mobilized and staffed properly at each out of country office.

The Iraqi Parliament did manage to pass five laws in the last week when they all showed up for work.

1. Increasing the salaries of judges and public prosecutors from 2008 levels
2. Implementing the Iraqi-Syrian Agreement regarding customs cooperation
3. Law for preventing a monopoly
4. Protecting Iraqi products
5. Law for custom fee's

PM Nuri al-Maliki, has made an announcement that 70,000 officers and members of the Ministry and Defense will be pensioned immediately after the March elections. I am not sure what is the cost on the retirement package.

The IHEC has stated that 42 out of 306 have been barred from participating in the March elections in the al-Anbar province.

The IHEC also announced recently that 6,539 candidates are for political positions and that 2,000 are woman.

The Kurds are suspected to only win 60-65 Parliamentary seats in the next election. President Talabani, will have some difficulty in obtaining the President position after the elections as Sunni's and the Change movement do not support him.

President Talabani, has stated that if the political blocs would like him to run for the Iraq President position that he will run, if not he will leave and head back to Sulymaniya and write his memoirs. My prediction is that he will be heading back to Sulymaniya.

The Kudistan Regional Government (KRG) Ministry has also approved a 2010 federal budget law, which they have and sent the details of the budget to KRG Parliament to be voted on.

The Electoral Conduct Law which is trying to be passed the same time as the 2010 federal budget law and some political parties are using this to attempt to derail the budget law. Some political groups had wanted the Electoral Law passed before the 2010 budget law. The Electoral Conduct law is the law that mandates all political parties to disclose their financial contributions and donations to their campaigns. I have said in recent newsletters that Iraq's neighbors are involved in sending large amounts of donations to political parties and candidates attempting to influence Iraq's government affairs.

There is a lawsuit that was filed by MP Shatha al-Musawi, against the recent oil contract award with BP and ExxonMobile. The case will be heard in Baghdad on 1 Feb. It will be a case to watch as it will effect all oil contracts signed to date by both the central government. If MP Musawi is successful oil contracts have the potential of becoming invalid. ☺

## State owned Drug Stores Closing

You probably did not know that the Iraqi government owns and controls drug pharmacies inside Iraq. The Health Inspector has just announced and also has a law to back the inspector in closing down all State run pharmacies. It is primarily due to the Iraqi's have a less favorable opinion of the State manufactured drugs then the drugs you get from the private sector. The Iraqi's think they are of poor quality and would rather not use them.

Iraqi Doctors are informing and telling people to go to the private sector and get their prescriptions filled that way. ☺

## Ministry of Finance Stopped payment on 13.5 million usd

The Baghdad newspaper al-Bayyna al Jadidah, recently reported an incident that occurred with the Ministry of Finance Baqr Jabber Al Zubaidi, when he was going through his mail and noticed a check for 13.5 million usd submitted by another ministry. The Finance Minister became suspicious and ordered an investigation and later found out that the contractor company payment should only have been 4.4 million usd. The Finance Minister called the other Minister and asked him if he should launch a full investigation or forget about the whole thing. The other Minister has not replied and has not called the Finance minister again. ☺

# Boycott Elections - Allawi

Iyad Allawi, head of the Iraqi List, is now coming out and saying that he will boycott the upcoming elections in March. Allawi said that if the candidates that were banned by the Accountability and Justice Committee are not reinstated then he was planning on boycotting the elections. Allawi surely knows that the appeals process is in the hands of the Higher Federal Court. ☞

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I have mentioned no RV in the beginning of January and also stand by no RV in February 2010. The meeting with PM Maliki and the Shia Cleric will not result in an RV. This is a scheduled meeting that has been planned since last year.

## FYI

I'm noticing that there's been a lot of discussion recently about ebooks and the information they may be providing when it comes to Iraq and the Iraqi Dinar.

Many questions have been sent my way asking me my opinion on them and without having read them it's pretty difficult for me to critique them or give my opinions.

With that said, I'd like to take this opportunity to offer any of my readers or newsletter subscribers the chance to forward me a copy of any ebook that they have in their possession so that I may read them and give my knowledgeable and honest opinion.

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