

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	530
Land:	Irak
Kilde:	The Guardian
Titel:	Bombings target Christian neighbourhoods in Baghdad
Udgivet:	10. november 2010.
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	29. november 2010

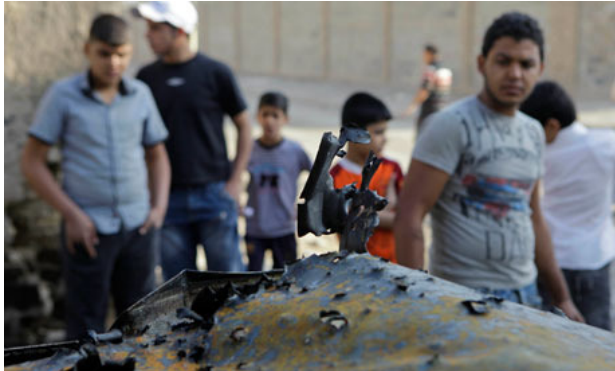
guardian.co.uk

Bombings target Christian neighbourhoods in Baghdad

Attacks on churches and homes, including that of a family caught in cathedral assault, leave at least four dead

Martin Chulov in Baghdad
guardian.co.uk, Wednesday 10 November 2010 13:47 GMT

A [larger](#) | [smaller](#)



Iraqis inspect a destroyed car at the scene of a bomb attack on Christian houses in Baghdad.

Photograph: Khalid Mohammed/AP

At least four people have been killed and dozens injured in co-ordinated attacks on Christian neighbourhoods in Baghdad.

More than 14 bombs and mortar shells were detonated, targeting homes and a church across the Iraqi capital.

At least one of today's attacks was aimed at the family of a victim of [an assault last week on a Baghdad cathedral](#), which left 53 worshippers dead. The terrorists identified the family by funeral signs still hanging outside the home.

Three Christian homes in the western suburb of Mansour were bombed last night with improvised explosives. Two homes were hit this morning by mortar fire in Dora, a Christian neighbourhood in the south. A bomb also exploded near a church in Kampsara and a house in nearby Baladiyat.

Karam Boutrous Torma, 50, was sleeping in Kampsara when an explosion tore through his front yard. A mourning sign had hung on his front wall for the past week announcing the death of his cousin Saad Adwar, 49, who was killed inside the Cathedral of Our Lady of Salvation. Adwar's mother was inside the house and his widow was nearby.

"We fled to the roof while everything burned below," Torma said, standing alongside the blackened remains of two cars. "When they got us down, we went to our neighbour's house."

Starting to cry, he added: "If we stay here we will lose our lives."

In the nearby suburb of al-Sana'a, Linda Jalal was woken at 5:45am by neighbours knocking on her door. "They said they saw a car drive by and drop a black bag behind our car," she said. The car had a cross hanging from the rear vision mirror. "We called the police and they said there was nothing they could do about it. We went to the back room and it exploded at 7:15am.

"I am scared out of my mind. We don't know our fate. We are desperate to leave, but we are scared to as well. There are so many people who have gone to America, or Sweden

and can't find work."

The scale of attacks against Christian targets is unprecedented and is likely to give fresh impetus to calls from some Christian leaders for their community to leave [Iraq](#).

The campaign of violence against Christians has shocked a country that endured three years of savage sectarian violence between 2005-2008.

"These operations, which targeted Christians, came as a continuation of the attack that targeted the Salvation church," an interior ministry source told Reuters.

The Islamic State of Iraq – an al-Qaida front group – claimed responsibility for that attack and vowed to launch further attacks against Christians to avenge the imprisonment of two Muslim women it claims are being held by Coptic priests in Egypt.

Ever since the cathedral killings, Iraq's 500,000 Christians have feared an escalation in violence. So too had Iraq's feuding politicians, who face increasing doubts about their ability to protect the country's citizens.

France has offered to treat survivors of the cathedral killings and has evacuated 40 wounded Iraqis, including a Muslim guard who was injured in the attack. The French government has also pledged to offer asylum to 1,000 Iraqi Christians.

Several Christian leaders last week called for Iraq's remaining Christians to flee the country.

[Archbishop Athanasios Dawood](#), the head of the Iraq Orthodox church in London, warned of a looming genocide. "Before they killed one, one, one but now, tens, tens. If they do that, they will finish us if we stay in Iraq," he said.

Priests and bishops in Lebanon and Egypt, which maintain strong Christian minorities, have also expressed fear for the future of Iraq's largest minority group.

Nouri al-Maliki, the Iraqi prime minister, yesterday visited the scene of the cathedral attack and urged Christian worshippers to remain in Iraq. He praised France for "showing compassion" to survivors, but said other countries should not encourage emigration.

Attacks against Christian targets became commonplace in the northern city of Mosul from 2005-2009. Violence in late 2008 forced hundreds of families to flee the city for Baghdad.

But Baghdad's Christian communities have not been targeted until now. Even during the sectarian violence of 2006-2007, Christians experienced nothing like the carnage between Shia and Sunni communities that ravaged the city.

guardian.co.uk © Guardian News and Media Limited 2010