

THE BATTALION

Member of Iraq's governing council injured in assassination attempt

By Tarek Al-Issawi
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A mortar attack on a Baghdad-area prison killed two U.S. military police and injured 13, the military said Sunday. The attack came just hours after an assassination attempt on a member of Iraq's Governing Council.

The mortar attack occurred at about 10 p.m. Saturday at the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad, the military said. It said no inmates were injured, but gave no further details.

The deaths brought to 302 the number of U.S. soldiers who have died in Iraq.

On Saturday, Aquila al-Hashimi, a Governing Council member and strong candidate to become Iraq's representative at the United Nations, was seriously wounded by six gunmen in a pickup truck who chased her in her car on Saturday.

She underwent a second operation and was in stable condition at a military hospital on the grounds of one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces where the Coalition Provisional Authority has its headquarters, an official with the U.S.-led civilian administration said on Sunday.

Al-Hashimi had been preparing to leave for a key U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York on Tuesday. Major U.S. allies are pressing for

Washington to give the United Nations a greater role in bringing stability to this fractured country.

The Governing Council president blamed Saddam loyalists for the shooting.

U.S.-led forces have been struggling to put down a guerrilla-style insurgency that has targeted Americans and their

Iraqi allies. The police chief of the central town of Khaldiya, who was working with U.S. forces, was assassinated by gunmen last week, and other attacks have killed police recruits trained by the Americans.

Last month, Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim, a top Shiite cleric who leads a movement with a seat on the Governing Council, was killed in a car bombing that left at least 85 people dead. Al-Hakim's brother, Abdel-Aziz, is a council member.

Saturday's attack came at 9 a.m., when gunmen fired a rocket-propelled grenade on al-Hashimi's car soon after she left her house in western Baghdad, members of her security detail said. The grenade missed, and

the attackers opened fire with assault rifles.

Firas Shams al-Din, 30, a security guard at a school near where the shooting occurred, said a pickup truck carrying six bearded men armed with Kalashnikovs, and two cars chased al-Hashimi's vehicle.

When Shams al-Din opened fire on the pickup, the three vehicles of attackers turned around and fled. Al-Hashimi's car crashed through a house's gate at the end of the street and into a parked car. Shams al-Din said he found her conscious, moaning in pain and bleeding.

Ahmad Chalabi, the president of the Governing Council in September, said al-Hashimi's attackers "were remnants of the Baathist regime and Saddam's assassins," referring to Saddam's former ruling Baath party.

"The members of the Governing Council and ministers will not be intimidated by the terrorists," Chalabi said in a statement. He said al-Hashimi had received threats recently.

Baghdad police commander Brig. Gen. Ahmed Ibrahim told The Associated Press that no

one had been arrested in the attack and he refused to say who might be behind it.

The 25-member Governing Council was established by the U.S.-led coalition in mid-July to put an Iraqi face on the process of rebuilding the country.

The White House denounced the assassination attempt. Spokeswoman Suzy DeFrancis called it a "tragic situation" that is a part of a "continuing pattern" in which insurgent forces attack signs of success in the process of Iraq's transition to democracy.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's office issued a statement saying, "Violence such as the murderous attack on Dr. al-Hashimi only retards that process and that goal."

Al-Hashimi has emerged as a leading foreign policy figure on the council, participating in a delegation that addressed the United Nations in July. At Tuesday's General Assembly session, the council delegation will try to assume Iraq's U.N. seat — and if it succeeds, many U.N. diplomats expected al-Hashimi to be named Iraq's representative.

Chalabi said in his statement that the council delegation would attend the U.N. session, but did not say whether al-Hashimi would be replaced.

The continuing instability has raised questions about America's stewardship of Iraq since President Bush declared an end to major combat operations on May 1.

"The members of the Governing Council and ministers will not be intimidated by the terrorists."

— Ahmad Chalabi
President of the Council

Former Citigroup CEO to head NYSE

By Eric McClam
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PROFILE

Interim leader named for NYSE

The New York Stock Exchange announced John S. Reed as its temporary leader on Sunday, less than a week after its previous chairman, Dick Grasso, was forced to step down. Reed, the former Citigroup chairman and CEO, will start as interim chairman on Sept. 30.

Age — 64
Hometown — Chicago
Education — Undergraduate degrees from Washington and Jefferson College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; master's degree from MIT; U.S. Army.
Career — Former chairman and co-chief executive of Citigroup, 1998-2000; chairman and chief executive of Citicorp and Citibank, 1984-1998. Joined Citibank in 1965.



John S. Reed, 1998
SOURCE: Associated Press AP

Reed's appointment is the latest effort by the NYSE to restore its image following the debacle with Grasso, which many said represented a failure of corporate governance at the institution.

The board has come under fire for approving Grasso's pay package and under pressure from federal regulators to revamp its practices. Half its seats are held by top executives of investment banks and brokerage firms — the very businesses the NYSE is supposed to monitor and regulate for fraud. The Securities and Exchange Commission, which oversees the NYSE's regulatory functions, has suggested there could be big changes ahead.

The exchange is expected to release a corporate governance plan on Oct. 2 that will, among other things, address compensation for future CEOs and potential changes in the board's structure and the ownership of the exchange.

Reed said improving the exchange's governance was a priority, but offered few specifics. He said smaller boards of directors of 10 to 12 people were generally easier to work with, but did not indicate whether he would seek to trim the 27-seat NYSE board.

Reed worked at Citi for more than 35 years before retiring in April 2000. He had been named CEO of Citicorp in 1984, and has been credited with building Citicorp into a corporate powerhouse through the 1990s, developing its technology infrastructure, slashing staff and selling off unprofitable assets.

Reed has only been inside the NYSE once, and has never sat on an NYSE committee — a fact observers said was key because of the pressure on the exchange to clean house.

"They clearly wanted someone who's an outsider, but who's knowledgeable," said Steven Kaplan, a finance professor at the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business.

Since his retirement, Reed said he has been teaching and writing. He said he is stepping down as lead director of the board of Altria Group, the parent company of tobacco giant Philip Morris, because of his new job.

NEW YORK — The New York Stock Exchange chose former Citigroup chairman and CEO John S. Reed as its interim leader Sunday for a salary of \$1, less than a week after its previous chairman was forced to step down amid outrage about his compensation.

Reed, 64, who left Citi in 2000 after losing a power struggle with then co-chairman Sanford I. Weill, will temporarily replace Dick Grasso, exchange officials announced at a hastily called news conference.

In a phone conference from France, where he was vacationing, Reed said there had been some failures in corporate governance at the exchange and he would make the issue a priority.

"I have seen crises quite comparable to what the NYSE has gone through ... and clearly it did not help anyone," Reed said.

He declined to comment on Grasso or the circumstances of Grasso's departure but said he realized the gravity of the situation. Grasso's pay package of \$187.5 million was considered excessive by many on and off Wall Street.

Reed, who said he will be paid \$1 for his work, will start at the exchange as interim chairman on Sept. 30, but he said he plans to start talking to other NYSE executives Monday morning.

He said that he hopes to have a permanent NYSE head in "months, and not years," and that he is not a candidate for the permanent job. A search committee led by Laurence Fink, CEO of investment group BlackRock Inc., will look for a permanent replacement for Grasso.

Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman William Donaldson released a statement in which he praised Reed for his "impeccable credentials ... which will be crucial as he works with the NYSE Board to ensure the highest standards of governance."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Putin rethinks role in rebuilding Iraq

NOVO-OGARYOVO, Russia (AP) — President Vladimir Putin said Saturday that Russia is ready to put aside differences over the war in Iraq to work with the United States on rebuilding the country, even holding out the possibility of eventually sending troops. But he told reporters that the United Nations must have a real, not a decorative role.

In a four-hour interview with The Associated Press and other American media ahead of a summit this week with President George W. Bush, Putin appeared optimistic about his upcoming talks with Bush at Camp David.

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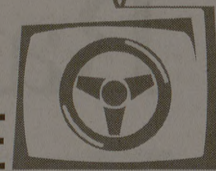
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