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Judge Postpones Hussein Trial as Lawyers Continue Boycott

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BAGHDAD, Sept. 26 — After throwing [Saddam Hussein](#) out of court again, the judge hearing the deposed dictator's genocide trial abruptly postponed the case until Oct. 9, so Mr. Hussein and his co-defendants could consult with lawyers who are boycotting the trial or find new ones.

The court session on Tuesday degenerated into a shouting match with the angry judge, Muhammad al-Uraibi, barking at Mr. Hussein and his co-defendants to "sit down" and "shut up." The men, charged with killing tens of thousands of Kurds in 1988, shouted back that the judge was not respecting them and had already decided their guilt.

The trial of Mr. Hussein has been in turmoil for a week, since Prime Minister [Nuri Kamal al-Maliki](#) fired the previous judge, who prosecutors had complained was biased in favor of the defendants. In protest, defense lawyers have been boycotting the trial.

After Judge Uraibi ejected Mr. Hussein from the courtroom on Tuesday, the other defendants rose in anger, and the judge demanded: "Shut up. Nobody talk."

After more testimony, the judge said he would postpone the case for nearly two weeks.

Elsewhere, insurgents and militiamen across central [Iraq](#) attacked mosques, police officers and, with one large blast, lunchtime diners who the police said had apparently been singled out because they could be seen eating in a public place during the Ramadan fast.

All told, news agencies reported that more than 20 people were killed in or around the capital. An Interior Ministry official also said 15 new dead bodies were discovered in Baghdad, the latest victims in the capital's continuing violence.

On Monday morning, insurgents staged a coordinated attack with mortars and a car bomb on a newly opened police station in northern Babil Province, south of the capital, killing at least two Iraqi police officers and wounding four policemen.

The attack on the Jurf al-Sakhr police station, which opened earlier this month at a cost of \$440,000, began when a white car drove through the gates of the station and then exploded when it rammed the northwest corner of the building, the United States military said.

Other insurgents simultaneously attacked guard towers nearby with machine guns and mortars. Eight American soldiers suffered minor wounds but were returned to duty, the military said.

In Baghdad, the attacks began early Tuesday. At 7 a.m., gunmen used explosives to severely damage a Sunni mosque in the southeastern part of the city, the Interior Ministry said.

Shortly before noon, a motorcycle packed with explosives detonated near Communist Party offices and a restaurant in central Baghdad. Four people were killed and 18 wounded, all of whom had been at or near the restaurant, an Interior Ministry official said.

Clashes raged in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Amil, killing at least three people. Two bombs exploded in Mahmudiya, south of Baghdad, killing five people and wounding eight. Two American soldiers also died in what the military described as a “noncombat incident” southwest of Baghdad on Tuesday. No other details were provided.

In the heavily fortified Green Zone, Iraqi lawmakers shouted at one another as debate proceeded over how quickly to allow provinces to become autonomous states.

Sunni political leaders had agreed to allow a bill, defining how these states would be formed, to come up for debate this week. The bill is backed by a large faction of Shiites and Kurds, but is opposed by many Sunnis, who say it will strip them of a share of the country’s oil wealth.

In return for Sunnis' agreeing to a debate, the Shiite and Kurdish factions agreed to the creation of a constitutional committee to examine amendments sought by Sunnis, and to postpone any actual move toward autonomous regions until at least 2008.

But a number of Sunni legislators made it clear on Tuesday that they would fight the proposal no matter what. One top Sunni legislator, Dhafir al-Ani, quit in protest as chairman of the committee scheduled to hear the proposal.

Abdul Razzaq al-Saiedi contributed reporting.

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