



BBC News in video and audio

News services

Your news when you want it



News Front Page

Last Updated: Thursday, 11 January 2007, 18:43 GMT

[E-mail this to a friend](#)

[Printable version](#)



[Africa](#)

[Americas](#)

[Asia-Pacific](#)

[Europe](#)

[Middle East](#)

[South Asia](#)

[UK](#)

[Business](#)

[Health](#)

[Science/Nature](#)

[Technology](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Have Your Say](#)

[In Pictures](#)

[Country Profiles](#)

[Special Reports](#)

[Programmes](#)

RELATED BBC SITES

- [SPORT](#)
- [WEATHER](#)

US Iraq raid draws Iranian anger

US forces have stormed a building in the northern Iraqi town of Irbil and seized six people said to be Iranians, prompting a diplomatic incident.



Iranian and Iraqi officials said the building was an Iranian consulate and the detainees its employees.

The US military said it was still investigating, but that the building did not have diplomatic status.

The troops raided the building at about 0300 (0001GMT), taking away computers and papers, according to local media.

AFP news agency quoted Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman as saying he did not know the nationality of the six but said they were "suspected of being closely tied to activities targeting Iraq and coalition forces".

"I can confirm for you through our forces there that this is not a consulate or a government building," he said.

THE STRUGGLE FOR IRAQ

NEW BUSH STRATEGY



'New way forward'

Could a new "Battle for Baghdad" reverse US fortunes in Iraq?

- [US: Iraq PM is 'on borrowed time'](#)
- [US to target anti-Iraq activity](#)
- [Iraqis split on Bush's last gamble](#)
- [Q&A: Bush's new Iraq strategy](#)
- [Bush and the Petraeus doctrine](#)
- [At-a-glance: Bush strategy](#)
- [Full text: Bush address on Iraq](#)

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

- [Hanging evokes ugly past](#)
- [Quick guide: Violence in Iraq](#)
- [Iraq violence in figures](#)

FEATURES

- [Sunni family's story](#)
- [Shia family's story](#)

HAVE YOUR SAY

- [ON THIS DAY](#)
- [EDITORS' BLOG](#)

LANGUAGES

- Arabic
- Persian
- Pashto
- Turkish
- French
- More

However, Tehran said the attack violated all international conventions. It has summoned ambassadors from Switzerland, representing US interests, and Iraq.

A spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry described the raid as an attempt to sabotage Tehran's relations with Iraq. One Iranian MP said it showed America's cruelty and meanness.

The raid comes amid high Iran-US tension.

In a major speech on Wednesday, President George W Bush said the US would take a tough stance towards Iran and Syria, whom he accused of destabilising Iraq.

The US also accuses Iran of seeking nuclear arms. Iran denies both charges.

Tehran counters that US military involvement in the Middle East endangers the whole region.

Pressure

A local TV station said Kurdish security forces had taken over the building after the Americans had left.

Irbil lies in Iraq's Kurdish-controlled north, about 350km (220 miles) from the capital Baghdad. Reports say the Iranian consulate there was set up last year under an agreement with the Kurdish regional government to facilitate cross-border visits.

One Iranian news agency with a correspondent in Irbil says five US helicopters were used to land troops on the roof of the Iranian consulate.

It reports that a number of vehicles cordoned off the streets around the building, while US soldiers warned the occupants in three different languages that they should surrender or be killed.

In December, US troops detained a number of Iranians in Iraq, including two with diplomatic immunity who were later released.

Thursday's raid came as US President George W Bush unveiled his new strategy in Iraq, which included increasing troop numbers and a commitment to stop Iranian support for "our enemies in Iraq".

BBC diplomatic correspondent Jonathan Marcus says the raid could signal a ratcheting-up of pressure on the Iranians, in line with the rhetorical thrust of his speech.

- [Should Bush send more troops?](#)
- [US readers discuss Iraq](#)

VIDEO AND AUDIO

- ▶ [WATCH](#) Bush statement
- ▶ [WATCH](#) TV reports on Iraq

Full coverage

RELATED INTERNET LINKS

- [US Department of Defence](#)
- [Iraqi Government](#)

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

TOP MIDDLE EAST STORIES

- [US: Iraq PM is 'on borrowed time'](#)
- [US Iraq raid draws Iranian anger](#)
- [Israeli PM buoyed by China visit](#)



| [News feeds](#)

MOST POPULAR STORIES NOW

[MOST E-MAILED](#)

[MOST READ](#)

• [US: Iraq PM is 'on borrowed time'](#)

• [US Iraq raid draws Iranian anger](#)

• [Family found for gigantic flowers](#)

• [Syphilis rates 'soaring in China'](#)

• [Post-communist Mongolia's struggle](#)

[Most popular now, in detail](#)



Dozens of casualties resulted from a truck bombing in Samarra

Meanwhile in the Iraqi capital, the five off-duty policemen were killed in an ambush in the western al-Khadra neighbourhood, hospital officials said

Security sources said another man was killed wounded in an attack on a money changer in downtown Baghdad.

In the restive Anbar province, the US military said that one of its troops was killed on Tuesday by a roadside bombing.

Other violence was reported in Mosul, where gunmen killed a professor driving home from work, and Samarra where a suicide truck bomber attacked the mayor's house, killing three people and wounding 33, including the mayor.

 [E-mail this to a friend](#)

 [Printable version](#)

FEATURES, VIEWS, ANALYSIS



In pictures

Your perspective on the world during the past week



Tough steppe

Change is slow in ancient and vast Mongolia



Journey's end?

An Albanian solution for the Guantanamo detainee dilemma

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

[E-mail news](#) [Mobiles Alerts](#) [News feeds](#) [Podcasts](#)

BBC
Copyright
Notice

• [Most Popular Now](#) | The most read story in North America is: [Family found for gigantic flowers](#)

[Back to top](#) ^^

[Help](#) [Privacy and cookies policy](#) [News sources](#) [About the BBC](#) [Contact us](#)