



News Report 17th - 23rd May

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Syria/Iraq: bombs kill 46 in Baghdad, leaflets on Raqqa

Explosions [erupted](#) in Baghdad on Tuesday, leaving 46 killed. The incidents occurred in the Sadr district – stronghold of the Shi'a preacher Muqtada al-Sadr - in the al-Shaab neighbourhood in northern Baghdad and a market in Nahiyet al-Rashid, in the south. As according to SITE, ISIS claimed the attack in al-Shaab, while others remain unclaimed.

Meanwhile, in Syria psychological warfare operations proceed, with propaganda leaflets dropped on Islamic State's stronghold in Raqqa. In such leaflets - *Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently* [reported](#) - people were asked to leave the city.

Nigeria/Niger: two Chibok students allegedly freed, and attack in Bosso

In a communiqué issued on 18th May, the Nigerian army [claimed](#) to have freed one of the girls abducted by Boko Haram in Chibok in 2014. The girl would be the first freed since then, when excluding the group of students that fled Chibok soon after Boko Haram's attack. Moreover, few days later, a second girl was [rescued](#), but Yakubu Nkeki – chairman of the *Chibok Abducted Girls Parents Group* – [denied](#) she may be one of those kidnapped in Chibok. It is then still uncertain who the girl is. Boko Haram didn't stop their campaign, though. Indeed, the group [carried out](#) an attack in the town of Bosso, in southern Niger. The attack is thought to have led to the death of at least seven people.

Yemen: government steps out of talks with Houthi rebels and ISIS attack

Talks in Kuwait between the Yemeni government and rebels were interrupted on Tuesday, when the executive's representatives [left](#) the talks. Indeed, they accused Houthi rebels to be using the talks to

rearm themselves, while not abiding by a United Nations Security Council resolution suggesting negotiations to find a mutually agreed compromise on power-sharing.

Meanwhile, terrorist activities in Yemen were stepped up by a terrorist attack that [took place](#) in the Yemeni city of Aden. In Aden, Islamic State members carried out a suicide operation, blowing up a car and killing at least 40 army recruits.

Libya: HRW reports life under ISIS in Sirte, and US thinks about train-and-equip

A recent report by *Human Rights Watch* published on 18th May shed light on the current situation in Islamic State's Libyan stronghold of Sirte. As [according to](#) HRW, the Islamic State would have executed at least 47 people – some by decapitation – on accusations including sorcery and espionage. Also, the group carried out floggings and other punishments for failing to abide by IS laws.

Meanwhile, and primarily in order to fight Islamic State militants deployed in the country, AFRICOM head gen. David Rodriguez [said](#) on Tuesday the US is considering train-and-equip operations in the country

Turkey: parliament strips members of immunity in plea to fight terrorism

The Turkish parliament [passed](#) an amendment on Friday to strip members of their immunity. The move comes after weeks of intense debate and a brawl, but was pushed by the government in a plea to fight terrorism. Indeed, PM Erdogan had previously called for the prosecution of members of the Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP) for ties with Kurdish militants historically leading an insurgency campaign in the country. The recent choice by the parliament is then widely seen as an anti-Kurdish move.

France: Abdeslam interrogated for the first time since extradition

Interrogated for the first time since extradition to France, Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdeslam [refused](#) to talk with authorities, causing the interrogation session to end abruptly. Abdeslam's lawyer Frank Berton said the suspect was distressed by measures taken against him, especially 24-hour video surveillance, which the lawyer defined illegal.

Egypt: plane crashes in the Mediterranean sea

Egyptair flight 804 departing from Paris for Cairo [disappeared](#) on Thursday while flying over the Mediterranean sea, close to Egyptian coasts. The incident led French and Egyptian authorities to [claim](#) the disappearance to have been caused by a terrorist attack, but investigations are ongoing to prove the origin of the incident, and are slowed down by the location of debris in the high sea. While the origins of the disaster are still dubious, the issues raised by the disappearance of flight 804 have been clearly [synthesised](#) by De Luce, who underlined how the plane's departure from Charles de Gaulle Airport shows how even in such nominally safe premises security can fail.

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