

Two Iraqi journalists kidnapped and murdered in separate attacks

New York, September 19, 2005—The Committee to Protect Journalists is alarmed by the separate kidnapping and murder of two Iraqi journalists in the past two days.

Fakher Haider of the *New York Times* was seized on Sunday night from his home in the al-Asmaey neighborhood of the southern city of Basra by several men claiming to be police officers. His body was found on Monday in the southwestern Al-Kiblah neighborhood with at least one gunshot to the head, according to his family. He also had bruises on his back, the *New York Times* said in a statement.

Haider, 38, who had been with the *New York Times* for more than two years, also worked for Merbad TV, a local Basra station, the *Guardian* in London, *National Geographic* and other publications. He was married with three small children.

On Friday, Hind Ismail, a 28-year-old reporter for the local daily *As-Saffir*, was kidnapped in the northern city of Mosul, local journalists told CPJ. Police in the southern suburb of al-Muthana found her body the next morning with a single bullet wound to the head.

"Hind was a very active reporter in Mosul," *As-Saffir* Deputy Editor Slayhe al-Jowiree said. "We respected her very much in her pursuit to uncover the truth," he added.

"We deplore the killing of these two reporters," said CPJ Executive Director Ann Cooper. "All journalists covering this story are in danger but those in the frontline now are Iraqis, and they are paying a terrible price."

The deaths take the number of journalists killed in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion to topple Saddam Hussein in March 2003

to 55. Insurgents are responsible for the bulk of those deaths. Five journalists including Hind have been killed in Mosul in 2005.

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