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Journalist killed in Iraq

Leigh Holmwood and agencies
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A correspondent for the Washington Post has been shot dead in Baghdad.

Salih Saif Aldin, 32, an Iraqi who sometimes wrote under the name Salih Dehema for security reasons, was killed yesterday while reporting on the violence in the Baghdad neighbourhood of Sadiyah, according to a statement from the newspaper.

The newspaper said that Aldin's wounds appeared to indicate he was shot at close range. His body was later found on the street, covered with newspapers.

Aldin was the first Post reporter to be killed during the Iraq war, the newspaper said.

Sadiyah is a formerly religiously mixed neighbourhood in south-west Baghdad that is now dominated by Shia Muslims, after most Sunnis were driven out by sectarian violence.

Aldin began working for the newspaper in early 2004 as a stringer in his hometown of Tikrit, 80 miles north of Baghdad, and later moved to the capital, the newspaper said.

"Courageous beyond imagination, Salih was determined to unveil the truth," said Sudarsan Raghavan, the Post's Baghdad bureau chief. "He was instrumental to the Post's coverage of Iraq."

Iraqi journalists working for local or international media frequently come under threats from insurgents because of their reporting or their affiliation with western organisations.

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• If you are writing a comment for publication, please mark clearly "for publication". Excluding Aldin's death, at least 118 journalists and 41 media support workers have been killed in Iraq since the war started in March 2003, according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists.

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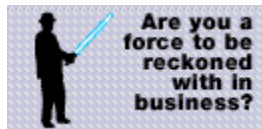
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