





OIL IN IRAQ: CURSE OR BLESSING?

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The programe is firmly axed on the history of Iraq's oil resources prior to the war in 2003 - is it a blessing or a curse? One thing is certain: these "oil barrels" are easily inflammable and have turned into a number of political powder kegs.
How is it possible that a nation who is litterally sitting on one gigantic oil barrel - the second largest oil resources in the world after Saudi Arabia - is now reduced to poverty and food rationing? Many survive only thanks to the U.N. food-for-oil programme in place since the first Gulf War. The income is re-distributed via a percentage system, but "sanction busting" has become a major (and extremely profitable) "business" run by those in power. 13% of the oil revenu under the U.N. programme goes to Iraqi Kurdistan and they've put it to good use: 700 schools built in the last years. Kurdistan has all to gain by Saddam's overthrow. Or do they ? Oil has been at the root and the very foundation of modern Iraq, it's been the subject of desire by the international powers and the cause of much upheaval. The nationalisation of the IPC, the Iraq Petroleum Company, in the early 70's gave rise to popular celebrations - the country had taken charge of its own destiny, like many others in the Middle East. But can they hold on to their destiny?

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