

Chinese hostages freed in Iraq (Sunday, January 23, 2005)

WARM UPS

CHAT: Iraq / hostage taking / good news / China / Chinese New Year / working or travelling in Iraq / Islamic Resistance Movement ...

GOOD NEWS: Write down 3 items of good news you have received or heard about in the past week. Talk about these with your partner. Repeat activity for bad news.

HAVE YOU HEARD?: In pairs make up your own 'good news story' about national or international events. Once you have decided on your fictitious good news, tell other people in your class. Start with, 'Hey, have you heard the good news? XYZ has just ...'

PRE-READING

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries, or type the words into a search engine field such as Google, to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'good', and 'news'.

TRUE / FALSE: Predict from the headline whether these statements are true or false:

- (a) Two of the eight Chinese hostages being held captive in Iraq have been released. T / F
- (b) The captives were released by a group who call themselves the 'We Love China Movement'. T / F
- (c) China has promised to discourage its citizens from going to Iraq.. T / F
- (d) A significant ransom was paid as part of the release conditions. T / F
- (e) The hostages were abducted three months ago. T / F
- (f) They had been working for a Chinese company involved in Iraq's reconstruction. T / F
- (g) Four days earlier their kidnappers had threatened to kill them. T / F
- (h) The Chinese people are friends and supporters of the Iraqi people. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|-----------|
| (a) | good | set free |
| (b) | announced | top |
| (c) | released | kidnapped |
| (d) | correspondent | warned |
| (e) | liberation | settle |
| (f) | abducted | stated |
| (g) | construction | welcome |
| (h) | threatened | building |
| (i) | head | freedom |
| (j) | mediate | reporter |

DEFINITIONS: Match the following words with the most likely definitions:

(a) announced (v)

(i) to make something publicly known, to tell everyone some news

(ii) to give up a title or position

(b) hostages (n)

(i) people kidnapped in a war or conflict to try to get the other country to do something or stop doing something

(ii) the people the host at a party must entertain

(c) captives (n)

(i) soldiers whose job is to find people to kidnap

(ii) people such as a prisoners of war, who are forcibly held, confined or enslaved.

(d) goodwill (n)

(i) an act or attitude of kindness or friendliness to start or keep a good relationship with other countries (or customers)

(ii) a feeling that the future will be bright and rosy

(e) liberation (n)

(i) the act of making something free; giving freedom

(ii) the act of taking away someone's freedom

(f) ransom (n)

(i) money paid by a person or government to set free someone who has been kidnapped

(ii) to have a very fast time in a marathon

(g) abducted (v)

(i) be carried off by force; kidnapped

(ii) the stomach muscles that allow you to keep a straight back

(h) construction (n)

(i) making buildings, roads and other such structures

(ii) not being able to move because you are in a tiny area / space

(i) reconstruction (n)

(i) to make again buildings, roads and other such structures that had been destroyed

(ii) to be prevented from voicing an opinion; have one's freedom of speech removed

(j) mediated (v)

(i) to find the exact middle point of something

(ii) to resolve or settle a dispute or argument by talking to all the conflicting parties

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases based on the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

(a) good

was paid

(b) eight Chinese hostages being

to kill them

(c) goodwill

taken by the Chinese people

(d) No ransom

this month

(e) be in good

forward to their return home

(f) looking

workers

(g) earlier

held in Iraq

(h) construction

health

(i) kidnappers had threatened

gesture

(j) appreciated the stand

news

GAP-FILL: Put the missing words under each paragraph into the gaps.

Chinese hostages freed in Iraq (Sun 23 Jan)

bNE: Good news from Iraq. The Dubai-_____ al-Arabiya News Channel has announced the release of the eight Chinese hostages being _____ in Iraq. The captives were released by a group who call themselves the Islamic Resistance Movement, as a “_____ gesture” towards China, especially after China promised to discourage its citizens from going to Iraq. Al-Arabiya’s correspondent reports, “The liberation of the eight hostages came after China agreed to no longer send its citizens to Iraq”. No _____ was paid by the Chinese government and all eight men were reported to be in good health and looking forward to their return home. The hostages were _____ earlier this month as they were driving to Jordan to go home for the Chinese New Year. They were construction workers and had been working for a Chinese company _____ in Iraq’s reconstruction. Only four days ago their kidnappers had threatened to kill them. Sheikh Harith Al Dhari, head of the Islamic Scholars Association in Iraq, an organization that _____ in the hostage release, told China’s Xinhua news agency that he “appreciated the _____ taken by the Chinese people who are friends and supporters of the Iraqi people.”

abducted goodwill involved held stand based ransom mediated

DISCUSSION:

- What do you think of the release of the Chinese hostages?
- What must it be like to be kidnapped in Iraq?
- If you were president, would you pay a ransom?
- If you were kidnapped, would you be angry if your government didn’t pay a ransom?
- What is his biggest ransom you’d expect your government to pay for your release?
- Iraq is a very beautiful and historical place. Would you like to visit?
- Why is most of the news in the papers and on TV bad news?
- Should your government be telling its citizens not to travel to Iraq?
- Have you ever celebrated / How do you celebrate ... Chinese New Year?
- What do you think of the eight Chinese construction workers?
- Will Iraq ever be reconstructed?
- Teacher’s / Students’ additional questions.

INTERNET / WEB LINKS:

News of this story from China:

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-01/22/content_411406.htm

News of this story from the Middle-East:

http://www.aljazeera.com/me.asp?service_ID=6699

What to do if you are kidnapped

<http://duncanlong.com/science-fiction-fantasy-short-stories/kidnap.html>

The al-Arabiya News Channel website

<http://www.alarabiya.net/english.aspx>

HOMEWORK

HOSTAGE SURVIVAL POSTER: Create a poster explaining how to survive in a hostage situation.

LETTER HOME: You have been taken hostage by the Islamic Resistance Movement in Iraq. Write a letter to friends / family explaining what life is like as a hostage.

FULL TEXT

Chinese hostages freed in Iraq (Sun 23 Jan)

BNE: Good news from Iraq. The Dubai-based al-Arabiya News Channel has announced the release of the eight Chinese hostages being **held** in Iraq. The captives were released by a group who call themselves the Islamic Resistance Movement, as a “**goodwill** gesture” towards China, especially after China promised to discourage its citizens from going to Iraq. Al-Arabiya’s correspondent reports, “The liberation of the eight hostages came after China agreed to no longer send its citizens to Iraq”. No **ransom** was paid by the Chinese government and all eight men were reported to be in good health and looking forward to their return home. The hostages were **abducted** earlier this month as they were driving to Jordan to go home for the Chinese New Year. They were construction workers and had been working for a Chinese company **involved** in Iraq’s reconstruction. Only four days ago their kidnappers had threatened to kill them. Sheikh Harith Al Dhari, head of the Islamic Scholars Association in Iraq, an organization that **mediated** in the hostage release, told China’s Xinhua news agency that he “appreciated the **stand** taken by the Chinese people who are friends and supporters of the Iraqi people.”