

Iraqi Police Say Female Suicide Bomber Kills Four

By VOA News
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Iraqi authorities say a female suicide bomber blew herself up outside the home of a local tribal leader in Diyala province, killing him and three others.

Police say the bomber detonated her vest as Sheikh Ghadban al-Karkhi came out of his house to meet her. One of his family members and two guards also were killed in the attack in the town of Kanaan, southeast of the provincial capital of Baquba.

Al-Qaida has increasingly used women suicide bombers to carry out attacks in Iraq.

On Sunday, the U.S. military said a recent series of deadly bombings in Iraq does not signal a trend toward rising violence in the country.

U.S. military spokesman Rear Admiral Gregory Smith said in Baghdad Sunday that recent attacks should be compared with the situation a year ago.

Iraq's overall level of violence is down sharply from last June, when the U.S. deployed 30,000 additional troops in the country.

Also on Sunday, Iraq's radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, called on his followers to work on turning his powerful Mahdi army into a more humanitarian organization.

Sadr had declared a ceasefire in August and in February extended it for another six months. The ceasefire is credited with contributing to the sharp drop in violence in Iraq.

Still, attacks blamed on al-Qaida in Iraq have killed scores of people in recent weeks.

Some information for this report was provided by AFP and Reuters.

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