
CIVILIAN CASUALTIES OF VIOLENCE IN IRAQ IN OCT. LOWEST IN 6 YEARS: UN

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BAGHDAD, Nov. 1 (Xinhua) -- Violence across Iraq killed 69 civilians in October, the lowest since the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) began publishing monthly casualty data six years ago, the UN mission said Thursday.

A UNAMI statement said that 105 civilians were wounded in the terror attacks and armed conflicts in Iraq in the past month.

Iraq's northern province of Nineveh was the worst affected with 65 civilian casualties, as 29 people were killed and 36 others wounded, it said.

Jan Kubis, the United Nations special envoy to Iraq and the UNAMI chief, said "while regretting the casualties, the fact that these figures are the lowest UNAMI has recorded since November 2012, is a positive indicator."

"It shows that the country is gradually coming out of the cycle of violence into which it was forced by terrorists," according to the statement.

The security situation in Iraq has been dramatically improved after Iraqi security forces fully defeated the extremist Islamic State militants across the country late in 2017.

However, small groups and individuals of extremist militants melted or regrouped in urban and rugged areas and are carrying out attacks against the security forces and civilians despite operations from time to time to hunt them down.

Many blame the chronic instability, cycle of violence, and the emergence of extremist groups in Iraq on the United States, which invaded the country in March 2003, under the pretext of seeking to destroy weapons of mass destruction in the country. But no such weapons were found.

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