
IRAQ STILL SUFFERS FROM TERRORISM DESPITE DAESH VICTORY

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Anadolu Ajansı (11 December 2018)

Dozens of people have been killed in terror attacks in Baghdad, Salahadin, Anbar and Mosul over the past year.

Daesh terrorists took over a third of the Iraqi territory after it launched an attack in June 2014 -- almost without encountering any resistance. Following the terror group's attacks and anti-terror operations in the country, mass destruction emerged in regions such as Mosul, Anbar and Salahadin, while millions of people were forced to flee.

Tens of thousands of settlements, the Mosul Airport, Mosul University, the majority of railway stations, bridges and hospitals in Mosul's Old City district suffered from great damage and destruction. Dozens of mass graves belonging to people executed by Daesh were unearthed in Mosul and Salahadin.

It was not easy for the Iraqi troops to take control over Mosul -- the second largest city of Iraq, the country which the terror group launched a series of attacks and made its first occupation over a territory.

It is estimated that some 40,000 people were killed following the military interventions against Daesh and its terror attacks. Baghdad, for its part, refrains from announcing the precise number of the military death toll.

Cost of Daesh reaches \$100 billion

Some 5 million people were dislocated during the three years of fighting against Daesh. Some of these people migrated abroad, whereas the significant portion of them took shelter in the camps established within Iraq.

In November 2017, Iraq's Migration and Displacement Ministry stated that only 42 percent of the people who had fled their homes could return effectively. According to this data, some three out of 5 million migrants were struggling to live in the camps in or out of the country.

Combating Daesh caused great financial hardships for Iraq. According to former Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, the cost of Iraq's fight against amounted to \$100 billion.

He had announced on Dec. 9, 2017, that Iraq was freed from the terror group, achieving victory. "The dream of liberation became a reality," he had asserted.

Iraq's serving Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi on Sunday declared Dec. 10 as the "Day of Great

Victory", making it a national holiday.

Terror attacks continue to kill

Even though Iraq was declared to be freed from Daesh terror group, terrorist attacks have claimed dozens of lives in various parts of Iraq over the past year.

Dozens were killed in Baghdad, Salahadin, Anbar and particularly in Mosul, where the number of terror incidents increased in recent months.

Shia leader Muqtada al-Sadr warned that Mosul was still under threat due to Daesh terrorists. Osama al-Nujaifi, a Sunni leader with Mosul origin, also called on the government to reassess the safety conditions in Mosul.

Premier Abdul-Mahdi, in response to the calls, said that the situation in Mosul was fine, however, Daesh was planning to perform attacks through its sleeping cells.

-Traces of war in Mosul

Amid the security concerns, Mosul still carries traces of the war against Daesh. The damage left by the battles in the ancient city is quite evident while it looks forward to being developed and rebuilt.

In Anbar, where Daesh was fought against, one can still witness hundreds of buildings that have collapsed to rubble.

On the other hand, the Iraqis await for the security concerns be relieved and for the acceleration of rebuilding efforts.

Unkept promises

Mouhsin al Haidisi, an Iraqi from Anbar who fled Daesh atrocities and took shelter in Baghdad, said that the government did not keep its promise to rebuild the country.

"It's quite difficult to live in our region today. We and hundreds of families like us can't find their houses that were collapsed to rubble. In Baghdad, we are regarded as refugees," he said.

Haidisi claimed that the budget allocated for the rebuilding was used by some political parties and nobody cared about the people left without homes.

'Iraq still under Daesh threat'

Ali Naji, an Iraqi journalist and researcher, pointed out that Daesh threat still looms around.

"Both at military and organizational level, Iraq is still under the Daesh threat. There are desert areas in the west which are not safe and the security personnel cannot reach.

"Also, Daesh's leading squad is from Iraq and their influence within the group is strong," he said.

Stating that it would take years for Iraq to fully recover from the Daesh threat, he said that there was still a risk that the terror group could reoccupy certain areas.

In June 2014, the terror group Daesh captured the whole of Mosul, Salahadin, Anbar provinces and certain portions of Diyala and Kirkuk. These areas were gradually taken back by the Iraqi state.

The U.S.-led coalition, formed in October 2014 to combat Daesh, provided the Iraqi administration with support, particularly through airstrikes.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-still-suffers-from-terrorism-despite-daesh-victory/1334765>

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