

Bombing during Kurdish official's funeral kills 25

BY ANTONIO CASTANEDA
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A car bomb obliterated a tent packed with mourners at the funeral of a Kurdish official in northern Iraq on Sunday, killing 25 people and wounding more than 50 in the deadliest attack since insurgents started bearing down on Iraq's newly named government late last week.

The blast capped four exceedingly violent days in which at least 116 people, including 11 Americans, were killed in a storm of bombings and ambushes blamed on Iraqi insurgents, believed largely populated by members of the disaffected Sunni Arab minority.

The Sunnis were dominant for decades under Saddam Hussein but were mainly shut out of the new government announced Thursday. The skyrocketing violence since then is viewed by some as a response to political developments that the United States and the Shiite-dominated power structure had hoped would tamp down the bloodshed.

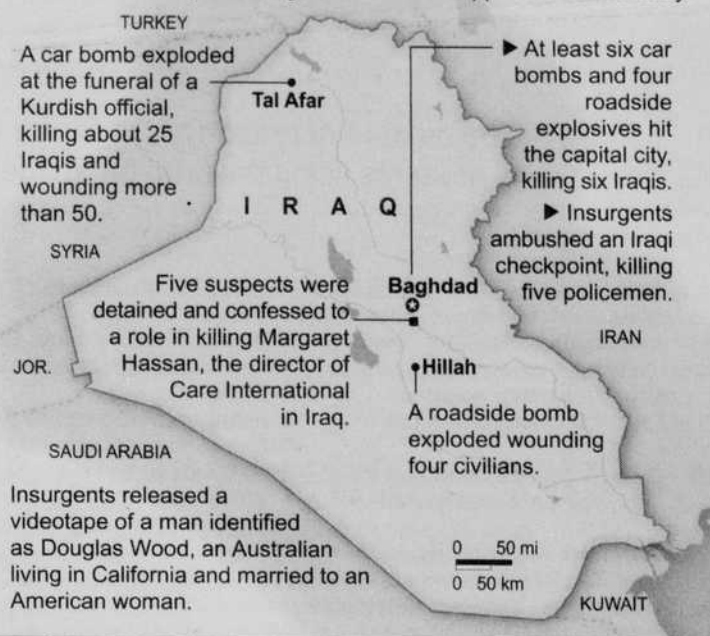
Despite the unrelenting violence, Iraq's national security adviser said Sunday the fledgling government was making progress against the insurgents.

"There is no shadow of doubt in my mind that by the end of the year, we would have achieved a lot," Mouwafak al-Rubaie said in an interview with CNN's "Late Edition." "Probably the back of the insurgency has already been broken."

Iraqi militants also released a video purporting to show Iraq's latest foreign hostage — an Australian married to an American and living in the San Francisco area. Douglas Wood, 63, was shown seated between two

Defiant insurgents persist with bombings

At least 116 people, including 11 U.S. soldiers, have died since Iraq's first democratically elected government was approved on Thursday.



SOURCE: ESRI

AP

masked militants pointing automatic weapons at him. His wife, Pearl, told The Associated Press that she saw the tape and the man being held was definitely her husband. She said he had been in Iraq about 18 months, working as an engineer.

The car bomb attack occurred in Tal Afar, 93 miles east of the Syrian border, the U.S. military and a provincial official said. Mourners had gathered for the funeral of Sayed Talib Sayed Wahab, an official of the Kurdish Democratic Party, said deputy provincial governor and party spokesman Khisru Goran, speaking from nearby Mosul.

Goran said a car plowed into the funeral tent and exploded, but the U.S. military said it was not a suicide attack. About 25 people were killed and more than 50 wounded, the U.S. military said.

U.S. troops, Iraqi police and ambulances raced to the carnage, but unidentified gunmen blocked the road and fighting broke out, Goran said.

At least six other car bombs — one of them a suicide attack — and four roadside explosions hit Baghdad on Sunday, killing six Iraqis, wounding more than 20 civilians and five U.S. soldiers.



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