

U.S. turns over three provinces to Iraqis

by UPI

BAGHDAD - The U.S. military turned over security responsibility for three northern Iraqi provinces to Iraq's own police and military on Wednesday.

Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniya provinces are predominantly Kurdish and have been relatively peaceful compared with the sectarian violence further south.

After the change of command, seven of Iraq's 18 provinces were under domestic control, although U.S. forces have not entirely withdrawn from any of them.

U.S. military spokesman U.S. Army Maj. Gen. William Caldwell said in December the goal was to have all provinces under Iraqi control by this autumn, CNN said.

The most recent handover was in April, when British forces relinquished Maysan province in the southeast, along the border with Iran.

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