

Iraq retaliation: 6 Sunni mosques damaged

by UPI

BAGHDAD - Six Sunni mosques were reported damaged Thursday despite pleas from Iraqi Shiite and Sunni politicians and clerics a day after a Shiite shrine was bombed.

The attacks involved bombings and fires in Baghdad and southern Iraq after a Shiite shrine in Samara, 75 miles north of Baghdad was all but leveled by two explosions.

In a televised plea for sectarian restraint from Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki soon after the blast, he said allegations the Samara blast -- the second since February 2006 -- was an inside job would be investigated.

The Shiite shrine is in a predominantly Sunni region and was being guarded by Sunni members of the Iraqi military, a New York Times correspondent reported.

Thursday, CNN quoted U.S. military officials as saying 15 members of the Iraqi military had been arrested.

Separately, a U.S. military statement said coalition forces had detained 25 suspected guerrillas in operations in Amiriya, Baghdad, Mosul and Tarmiya on Wednesday and Thursday.

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