

Civilian casualties drop in Iraq

by UPI

BAGHDAD - The civilian death toll in Iraq dropped in June, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

Iraqi officials told The New York Times that across Iraq, there were about 1,200 civilian deaths in June, a 36 percent decrease.

The U.S. military does not release civilian death figures but also reported a decrease.

"We can't tell yet the effect we're having," U.S. Army Lt. Col. Christopher Garver told the Times. "But reducing deaths in the civilian population is why we're doing what we're doing."

In Baghdad, an Interior Ministry official told the newspaper that monthly civilian deaths from assassinations, bombs or gunshots decreased from 1,070 in May to 730 in June.

The number of bodies found in Baghdad is considered a measure of sectarian violence. The number of dead bodies found in Baghdad in June, 540, was higher than the 411 bodies found in April but lower than the 726 found in May, the Times reported.

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