

Iraqi Sunnis step up assassinations

by UPI

BAGHDAD -- Sunni Muslim militants in Iraq are using the holy month of Ramadan to mount a campaign of assassinations against public officials, The New York Times reported. As of Wednesday morning, Iraqi Interior Ministry officials told the newspaper Sunnis had staged 10 attacks within the past 48 hours in the province of Diyala and the cities of Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk, Fallujah, Kut and Samarra. Many of the attacks are linked to al-Qaida and target Shiites or Sunnis assisting the Shiite-dominated government or U.S.-led coalition, the report said. Police have been a particular target in recent days, officials said. The chief of Baquba's force was killed, another police leader is in critical condition and a third chief escaped injury in various attacks, an Interior Ministry official said. Iraqi Maj. Gen. Hussein Kamal, the deputy interior minister for information and national investigations, told the Times the campaign wasn't a surprise. "We warned the government just a few days ago that there is a new plan by terrorist groups to target senior governmental officials and particularly Interior Ministry officials," he said.

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