

## **Iraq officials: Bombs in Diyala province kill over 40 people**

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**Baghdad:** Two bombs striking neighborhoods in Iraq's eastern Diyala province killed at least 42 people Monday night, officials said, less than a month after the region was the scene of one of the deadliest attacks to hit the country in recent years.

The deadlier of Monday's two attacks happened near the provincial capital, Baquba, located 35 miles (60 kilometers) northeast of Baghdad.

Police said a suicide car bomb tore through a marketplace, killing at least 35 people and wounding 72.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack, in a statement distributed on Twitter, saying an Iraqi fighter named Abdullah al-Ansai detonated his explosives-laden vehicle in the predominantly Shiite neighborhood of Huwaydah.

The second took place in the village of Kanaan, where officials said a suicide bomber blew himself up in a residential area, killing seven people and wounding 15.

Hospital officials corroborated the casualty figures.

All spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to journalists.

Residents in Diyala have been calling for greater protection from security forces after the Islamic State group bombed a crowded marketplace last month, killing 115 people, including women and children.

The mostly Shiite victims were gathered to mark the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The Sunni-extremist Islamic State group considers Shiites to be apostates.

The government in Baghdad vowed to apprehend the culprits and better secure Diyala.

But anger is rife in the volatile province, where a number of towns were captured by the Islamic State group last year.

Iraqi forces and Kurdish fighters since have retaken those areas, but clashes between the militants and security forces continue.

The Sunni militant group has been behind several similar large-scale attacks on civilians or military checkpoints as it seeks to expand its territory.

The group currently controls about a third of Iraq and Syria in a self-declared "caliphate."

- AP