

Many dead in Turkmen sub district of Taze Khurmatu by a suicide truck bomb

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At least 22 people have been killed by a suicide truck bomb attack in Turkmen sub district Taze Khurmatu south of Turkmen city of city of Kerkuk.

The attack struck near a mosque in Taze Khurmatu, a predominantly Turkmen Shiite town, at around 1:00 pm (1000 GMT) and women and children among its victims.





The attack happened as worshippers were leaving the packed Al-Rasoul mosque; run by the Turkmen community, after midday prayers and the force of the blast left a deep crater in the ground.



According to the Turkmeneli TV, the explosion had flattened about 30 homes at least 65 people have been killed and over 175 Türkmen were injured, many of them seriously.



The latest attack comes weeks before US forces are due to withdraw, leading to concerns that violence could escalate. The Taze Khurmatu bombing comes week ahead of a deadline for US troops to withdraw from towns and cities in Iraq, as part of a landmark security accord signed between Washington and Baghdad in November.





Many Turkmen think this explosion was carried out by a specific group who wanted to control the city of Kerkuk and change the demography of the town. The most striking thing was that the attack was carried out in a residential area with no presence of a police station or governmental building in the area.



Kerkuk, an oil-rich city 250 km (155 miles) from Baghdad, Oil-rich Kerkuk is plagued with intercommunal tensions among its Kurdish, Turkmen and Arab communities.



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