

Rocket attack at Baghdad airport kills Iraqi paramilitary members



Baghdad, January 2 (RHC)-- At least five members of an Iraqi paramilitary group and two of their "guests" were killed when rockets believed to be fired by US forces hit their vehicles, as they were traveling at Baghdad's international airport.

Sources from the Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF) told Al Jazeera that the rockets destroyed two vehicles carrying "high profile guests", who had arrived at the airport and were being escorted by a PMF public relations official.

The identities of the PMF members and guests have not been released. Al Jazeera's Osama bin Javid, reporting from Baghdad, said the incident appeared to be a targeted strike.

PMF sources believe that the strike was carried out by the United States.

AFP news agency, meanwhile, reported that at least eight individuals were killed in the attack.

Witnesses in the area also told Al Jazeera that they could hear the sounds of sirens and helicopters in the air following the pre-dawn attack. The area of the incident has been cordoned off, authorities said, but the international airport remains in operation.

The attack occurred amid tensions with Washington after protesters breached the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. The attack at the embassy on New Year's Eve was in response to a deadly U.S. airstrike that killed 25 forces of the PMF, also known as the Hashd al-Shaabi group.

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