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Poll: Civilian toll in Iraq may top 1M

A British survey offers the highest estimate to date. At least 4 die in a Sadr City car bombing.

By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer
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BAGHDAD -- -- A car bomb blew up in the capital's Shiite Muslim neighborhood of Sadr City on Thursday, killing at least four people, as a new survey suggested that the civilian death toll from the war could be more than 1 million.

The figure from ORB, a British polling agency that has conducted several surveys in Iraq, followed statements this week from the U.S. military defending itself against accusations it was trying to play down Iraqi deaths to make its strategy appear successful.



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The military has said civilian deaths from sectarian violence have fallen more than 55% since President Bush sent an additional 28,500 troops to Iraq this year, but it does not provide specific numbers.

According to the ORB poll, a survey of 1,461 adults suggested that the total number slain during more than four years of war was more than 1.2 million.

ORB said it drew its conclusion from responses to the question about those living under one roof: "How many members of your household, if any, have died as a result of the conflict in Iraq since 2003?"

Based on Iraq's estimated number of households -- 4,050,597 -- it said the 1.2 million figure was reasonable.

There was no way to verify the number, because the government does not provide a full count of civilian deaths. Neither does the U.S. military.