



SHANAZ IBRAHIM AHMED  
First Lady of the Republic of IRAQ

**PRESS RELEASE  
OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY OF IRAQ  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: Saturday, 21 December, 2024

**Press Conference Announcement: Mass Grave Discovery in Samawa  
Province**

**Samawa Province (exact location available upon request)  
Sunday, 22 December, 2024**

The Office of the First Lady of Iraq announces a press conference to provide updates on the discovery and ongoing efforts at a mass grave site in the Tel al-Sheikhiya desert in Samawa Province.

This mass grave, uncovered after a week of intensive work, contains human remains believed to be Kurdish women and children, identified by their colorful Kurdish clothing. This heartbreaking discovery sheds further light on the atrocities committed against the Kurdish community during Iraq's recent history. From the 1980s, Saddam Hussein began a brutal crackdown on minorities and opposition groups, culminating in the Anfal campaign.

The Anfal campaign, orchestrated by Saddam Hussein's regime in 1988, was a systematic act of genocide targeting the Kurdish population in Iraq. Hundreds of thousands of Kurds, including women and children, were forcibly removed from their homes, brutally murdered, and buried in mass graves. Entire villages were destroyed, leaving a legacy of unimaginable suffering and loss that continues to impact survivors and families to this day.

**THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN THE PRESENCE OF:**

- Her Excellency Shanaz Ibrahim Ahmed, First Lady of the Republic of Iraq
- Dr. Ali Al-Shukri, Chairman of the Advisory and Experts Authority at the Presidency of the Republic
- Muhannad Al-Ataby, Governor of Samawah Governorate
- Diaan Kareem Al-Saadi, Director General of the Mass Graves Department at the Martyrs Foundation
- Fawaz Abdul Abbas, Vice President of the International Committee for Missing Persons IMCP
- Teams of the Forensic Medicine Department at the Ministry of Health

This event will outline the ongoing excavation process, forensic procedures, and the steps being taken to identify and honor the victims. The First Lady will also address the broader national and humanitarian mission to recover and dignify the remains of all those who perished in mass atrocities.

**Location:** Samawa Province (exact location available upon request)

**Time:** Sunday, 22 December, 2024

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**For additional information or press inquiries, please contact:**

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