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people and injuring 23. The Dora bombing was the second major attack in as many days against a Shiite target in the capital. Twelve people died Monday when a suicide bomber detonated an explosives belt on a bus in the heavily Shiite district of Kazimiyah.

At least 969 Iraqis have been killed in war-related violence this year and at least 986 have been wounded, according to an Associated Press count.

However, large-scale

attacks against civilians have declined in recent weeks amid widespread public criticism, including from Sunnis clerics and others sympathetic to the Sunni-dominated insurgency.

Some Sunni insurgent groups are believed to be holding back to give Sunni Arab politicians a chance to negotiate concessions from Shiites and Kurds during talks on a new government.

However, talks among parties that won parliamentary seats in the Dec. 15 elections have bogged down because of

fundamental differences among Shiite, Sunni Arab and Kurdish politicians.

U.S. officials believe a government capable of winning the trust of all communities is essential so the United States can hand over more security responsibility to the Iraqis and begin sending the 138,000 American troops home this year.

On Tuesday, Mohammed al-Askari, a Defense Ministry spokesman, confirmed that Iraqi soldiers had detained 18 policemen who had seized two men for unknown

reasons. Al-Askari added that one of the men who were held captive by the 18 was a police officer from the mostly Shiite southern city of Kut.

The Interior Ministry has denied running or sanctioning death squads. On Thursday, however, the ministry announced an investigation into alleged death squads after U.S. military officials announced the arrest last month of 22 policemen who were about to kill a Sunni Arab north of Baghdad.

Also Tuesday, British

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw lent his voice to international calls for a broad-based government, telling Iraqi leaders in Baghdad that "no party, no ethnic or religious grouping can dominate" the next government.

"It is a crucial moment today for the people of Iraq," Straw told reporters after meeting President Jalal Talabani. "The international community, particularly those of us who played a part in liberating Iraq, obviously have an interest in a prosperous and stable and democratic Iraq."

Straw's comments followed a blunt warning Monday by U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad that Iraqis risk losing international support if key ministries end up in the hands of politicians with ties to militias.

"We are not going to invest the resources of the American people and build forces that are run by people who are sectarian" and tied to the militias, Khalilzad said.

A coalition of Shiite Muslim religious parties won 130 of the 275 seats in the new parliament.

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lobbied the state and won an agreement from the Department of Education to order 500 copies of the book "The Orangeburg Massacre" to stock the shelves of public middle and high schools across the state.

The book chronicles the February night when Hammond, Middleton and Smith were killed and 27 other protesters were wounded. The unarmed, mostly black students were struck by police gunfire while authorities were

trying to disperse a protest on the then S.C. State College campus.

"We've always been trying to figure out how we can get more exposure to what happened," said Sellers, director of USC's African-American Studies program.

"One of the things we can do is actually get the book into the library of all the schools and in that way we have an opportunity to expose more younger people to this event."

Sellers is adamant that the state should move to fully recognize the night that he experienced first hand.

He was there as an officer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and is one of the surviving shooting victims. He was the only one convicted and was jailed for seven months on the rioting charges. He is profiled in the book as "the scapegoat."

Sellers was pardoned of the conviction in 1993.

Although an apology was issued by Gov. Sanford in 2003 for the shootings, Sellers would like to see a formal committee investigate the event.

"Our overarching interest is to get some blue

ribbon committee to do a study of what happened," Sellers said. "I think the committee could make some recommendations about how you amend what happened, make some contrition."

Sellers later added, "I don't even think it's an issue of prosecution right now. It's an issue of truth."

Bass, a College of Charleston professor and co-author of the book, echoed Sellers' overall goal in an e-mail interview.

"I would like to see a special commission, created by the legislature and

selected to insure maximum credibility and granted sufficient funds, make a full and official report to the people of South Carolina," Bass said. "Had three white students been shot and killed by police gunfire in 1968 on the campus of Clemson or USC, it is difficult to believe that 38 years later there would have been no official report to the people of South Carolina."

Bass was also in Orangeburg that night reporting on the protest for The Charlotte Observer. There, he covered the protest and the shootings, and was moved to write "The Orangeburg Massacre" during the next two years with fellow reporter Jack Nelson, who was then with The Los Angeles Times.

Bass said the incident received scarce and inaccurate press attention.

"The shooting occurred late at night, the AP initially misreported what happened as 'an exchange of gunfire' and corrected it only a few years ago; the students were black at a time of national reaction to the urban riots and unrest in the north and west, and misleading

statements from state officials were easily accepted by most of the press."

Sellers said he believes Bass and Nelson were inspired to write the book because the men "were in fact Southerners and they felt an obligation and responsibility to tell the truth as bloody and as harsh and as brutal as it might be."

But now, nearly 40 years since the shootings, Sellers refuses to give up on the idea of bringing more light to an incident he feels many state leaders have moved to "cover up."

"After the Orangeburg massacre occurred, I think there was a deliberate and conscientious effort to cut it out of any historical record in the state of South Carolina," Sellers said.

"I'd like to be honest about what happened so that I don't have to worry about that journey being completed so that the next generation will have the facts and be able to make way of those obstacles to progress."

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecocknews@gum.sc.edu](mailto:gamecocknews@gum.sc.edu)



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