



## US suicidal veterans surpassing KIAs

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At least 13 American soldiers have committed suicide in March as post traumatic syndrome is increasing suicide tendency among Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans.

The latest figure has brought to 56 the number of US soldiers' suicide cases in 2009, according to figures released by the US Army, a press TV correspondent reported on Monday.

According to US medics, with 23 soldiers committing suicide in January, the number of those killed themselves was higher than the number of soldiers killed in combat-related incidents.

Eighteen other suicide cases were also reported in the US military in February.

Based on the report, an increasing rate of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are among leading causes of suicide in the US troops deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

This is while the US Army has reportedly pressured its medical staff [against diagnosing Iraq war vets with PTSD](#), in a bid to cut medical costs.

"High agitation and constant state of high alert" are some of the most common stress symptoms among wounded soldiers treated in Washington DC's Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

At least 10 to 15 percent of troops who receive treatment at the center suffer from PTSD.

According to Iraqi officials' estimates, some 600 US troops, including senior officers, have committed suicide in Iraq since the invasion of the country in 2003. Half of the suicide attempts have been successful.

Official figures reported 72 suicides in 2003, 67 in 2004, 83 in 2005 and 97 others in 2006.

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