



AP Poll: two-thirds of Japanese say war in Iraq has increase worldwide terror threat.

WASHINGTON DC(AP) Nearly two-thirds of people in Japan believe that the war in Iraq has increased the threat of terrorism worldwide, an Associated Press poll finds.

Fieldwork for the poll was done by Nikkei Research Inc. for Ipsos, an international polling firm. The poll of 1,000 Japanese was conducted on March 5-7, 2004. The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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WASHINGTON DC -- (AP) Nearly two-thirds of people in Japan believe that the war in Iraq has increased the threat of terrorism worldwide, an Associated Press poll finds.

The AP-Ipsos poll, conducted before the Madrid subway bombing, found 63 percent of Japanese held that view. Seventy-four percent said they worry about terrorism in their country; Concern was especially keen among Japanese women _ 79 percent of women surveyed expressed worries about terror at home, compared to 68 percent of Japanese men.

On Thursday, police presence at six major rail stations in Tokyo was bolstered after an Islamic militant group identified +Japan+, Italy, Britain or Australia as potential next targets for terrorism. The warning from the Brigade of Abu Hafs al-Masri was posted on the web site of an Arabic newspaper based in London.

In the poll, 67 percent of Japanese said they felt ongoing violence between Israelis and Palestinians also had increased the threat of global terror. And 64 percent said they have a negative opinion of the role President George W. Bush plays in world affairs, while 31 percent said they felt positive about Bush's role.

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The findings in Japan were consistent with an earlier Ipsos poll of citizens in Canada, Mexico and five European nations: Britain, France, Italy, Germany and Spain.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has said the threat of terror will not sway Japan's support for the military action in Iraq. Japan has sent troops to southern Iraq on a humanitarian mission and has been on high alert for terror since last month.

According to the Ipsos poll, Japanese citizens were almost evenly divided on whether military action should have been taken in Iraq. Forty-seven percent said there should not have been a war, while 45 percent said the war was justified for reasons other than eliminating Saddam Hussein's purported stockpile of destructive weapons.