



Realtime Analysis and Publishing of IED Data

Weekly News Update

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The RAPID Weekly News Update is a weekly collection of unclassified media and news bulletins focused on noteworthy improvised explosive attacks and trends in the EOD/C-IED community. To subscribe to this weekly publication and/or to receive additional IED-related reports, please request a RAPID login at <https://rapid.a-tsolutions.com> using your government (.mil or .gov) email account.



The explosives that were defused by the railway police at Tellapur in Medak district on Saturday.
(PHOTO: MOHD ARIF)

[See [Five Explosives Defused Near Railway Underbridge](#)]

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1. [Attack, Afghanistan] Suicide Bombing Kills Eight In East Afghanistan

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-suicide-bomb/24586427.html>

A suicide bomber has blown himself up at a police checkpoint in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least eight people.

Khost Province police chief Sardar Mohammad Zazia said the bomber walked up to a checkpoint in Ali Sher district and detonated his explosives-rigged vest, killing two policemen and six civilians.

Suicide bombings and other violence continue in Afghanistan as heads of state gather for a NATO summit in Chicago to discuss the security needs of Afghanistan after most foreign troops leave or move to support roles by the end of 2014.

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2. [Security, Afghanistan] Soldiers Wreck Enemy's Tea Break With Raid On IED Plant

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://www6.lexisnexis.com/publisher/EndUser?Action=UserDisplayFullDocument&orgId=574&topicId=100049843&docId=:1669914279&Em=7&start=21>

A squad of elite troops captured a secret enemy bomb factory during a Taliban tea break.

The soldiers stormed into the compound under heavy fire - only to find the steaming hot brew and six glasses.

The Taliban had fled, leaving behind 110kg of high explosives and a load of pressure plate detonators.

The factory, deep in enemy territory in the Upper Gereshk Valley, also contained four ready-to-use roadside bombs.

It was captured by soldiers from the 12 Brigade Reconnaissance Force working with Afghan commandos in a helicopter assault earlier this month.

Light Dragoons Sergeant James Short, 28, led a squad airlifted into the attack by Chinook chopper.

The veteran of five tours of Iraq and Afghanistan, from Warminster, Wilts, said: "I led my section through thick 'Green Zone' towards a suspected cache location.

"When we were 150metres to the north-west, I stopped my patrol to give cover to the other section behind as they moved across the open ground.

"That's when the insurgents opened up from the south across the river and east from two compounds.

"They were firing under-slung grenade launchers and AK-47 rifles.

"My section provided fire support to the rest of the patrol."

He went on: "We won the firefight and pushed forward towards the enemy.

"We regrouped then cleared three compounds, bounding over walls towards the target area.

"The objective was a single derelict building with a locked door.

"We breached the door of the building using a small explosive charge to find a huge IED cache.

"Inside was 110kg of explosives and a load of other IED components including an insurgent radio.

"The explosives were prepared in containers ready for use."

James added: "Outside the compound was a pot of tea and six glasses, still steaming from when the insurgents had been there.

"The explosive ordnance disposal team were then brought forward to destroy the IEDs.

"They rigged their charges and we pulled back to the safety of a compound and waited for the explosion. They didn't disappoint - the ground shook."

He said: "This find has put the enemy back months, surely saving many lives within Helmand Province."

Captain Harry Amos, Officer Commanding 1st Troop 12 BRF, said: "Sgt Short flawlessly led the men under fire and then forward, right on top of the insurgents who engaged us.

"I'm immensely proud of my boys in how they have continuously handled the threat imposed by the insurgents.

"The troop has stuck together and performed outstandingly well in taking the fight to the Taliban doorstep.

"While working with Afghan commandos, we have successfully denied Taliban lethal aid which has had a significant effect in reducing the threat faced by the locals of Helmand.

"We will continue to fight and work hard in bringing security to the people of Afghanistan and look forward to seeing our loved ones on our return to Britain."

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3. [Attack, Pakistan] Hindu Temple Attacked In Peshawar

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/381683/hindu-temple-attacked-in-peshawar/>

A Hindu temple in Peshawar was attacked by unknown men on Sunday, Express News reported.

The Goraknath Temple, located in the Gor Khatri district, was recently reopened for worship after being closed for almost 60 years over ownership issue.

A two-member bench of the Peshawar High Court (PHC), in its verdict on September 15, 2012, wrote that stopping religious activities at a place of worship was against the law.

Pujari Ramesh Gurudario of Goraknath temple said that when he arrived for worship today, some unknown men entered the place and attacked the sacred statues and pictures. The assailants managed to escape after the attack.

Police have taken notice of the incident and filed an FIR.

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4. [Attack, Pakistan] Blast In Travel Agency Rocks Peshawar

Monday, May 21 2012

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/382163/blast-in-travel-agency-rocks-peshawar/>

The office of a travel agency located in the Shoba Bazaar area of Peshawar was damaged in an explosion late on Monday night.

The blast took place inside the office of Link Travel Agency, within the remits of East Cantt police station.

Local residents, talking to The Express Tribune, said that the explosion took place at around 10 pm inside the agency's office in Chinar Building. They added that the office was closed when the explosion took place.

An official of the East Cantt police station said that they have cordoned off the area and an investigation is currently underway. "The damage seems to be limited to the office so far and we have called the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) to check it," he said, adding that it was premature to jump to any conclusions at this point.

Meanwhile, Rescue 1122 sources said that they rushed to the area after receiving information of a blast but the police had told them that there were no casualties in the explosion.

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5. [Trend, Afghanistan] ISAF Joint Command Evening Operational Update

Tuesday, May 22 2012

<http://www.dvidshub.net/news/88787/isaf-joint-command-evening-operational-update#.T7vfTFI7uSo>

An Afghan and coalition security force detained a Haqqani facilitator during an operation in Bak district, Khost province, May 22.

The facilitator supplied weapons, ammunition and improvised explosive devices to insurgents for attacks against Afghan and coalition troops throughout the district.

The security force also detained several additional insurgents as a result of this operation.

South

A combined Afghan and coalition security force discovered an improvised explosive device production facility in Kajaki district, Helmand province, Friday. The facility contained 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of home-made explosives, three anti-personnel mines, eight detonators, and one rocket-propelled grenade. At the same facility, the combined force also discovered a cache of drugs that included 11 kilograms (24 pounds) of wet opium and 910 kilograms (2,002 pounds) of poppy seed. All the narcotics, explosives and IED components were destroyed in place.

A combined Afghan and coalition security force discovered a weapons cache in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province, May 22. The cache consisted of approximately 200 kilograms (440 pounds) of home-made explosives, multiple pressure plate detonation devices, and various improvised explosive device electronic making components. Security forces destroyed the cache on site.

East

A combined Afghan and coalition security force discovered an explosives cache in Musa Khel district, Khost province, May 22. The cache consisted of approximately 680 kilograms (1500 pounds) of home-made explosives. Security forces destroyed the cache on site without incident.

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6. [Security, Pakistan] Drone Kills Four Suspected Militants In NW Pakistan

Wednesday, May 23 2012

<http://www.voanews.com/content/drones-kills-4-suspected-militants-in-pakistan/920361.html>

Pakistani intelligence officials say a U.S. drone strike has killed four suspected militants in northwest Pakistan.

The officials say two missiles hit a compound Wednesday near Miranshah, in the tribal belt near the Afghan border.

Pakistani lawmakers have called for an end to U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani soil, but the United States says the strikes targeting militants are crucial to defeating al-Qaida and the Taliban.

Relations between the countries hit a low in November when U.S. airstrikes mistakenly killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. Islamabad responded by cutting off NATO ground supply routes, and negotiations continue on a deal to re-open the borders.

A U.S. Senate subcommittee voted Tuesday to cut proposed aid to Pakistan by more than half, and threatened to withhold even more money unless the supply routes are reopened.

The aid is part of President Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year.

The panel voted \$1 billion in aid to Pakistan - a 58 percent cut in the level proposed by Obama. The amount includes \$50 million for counterinsurgency that is tied to the NATO supply line reopening.

Panel leaders said they do not want to invest in an uncooperative nation.

The spending plan is far from final. The full Senate committee, both houses of Congress and Obama must approve the budget.

The U.S. withdrew as much as \$3 billion of promised military aid as relations with Pakistan deteriorated following the November airstrikes.



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7. [Law Enforcement, Afghanistan] Afghan-Led Security Force Captures Insurgent Facilitator

Thursday, May 24 2012

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=116475>

An Afghan-led, coalition-supported security force detained an Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan facilitator and several other insurgents during an operation in the Argo district of Afghanistan's Badakhshan province today, military officials reported.

The facilitator was responsible for acquiring and transporting explosive materials and planning improvised explosive device attacks against Afghan and coalition forces throughout the district, officials said.

In other operations today:

-- In the Shorabak district of Kandahar province, coalition forces discovered an IED cache containing 5,000 pounds of homemade explosives and several main charges. All of the materials were destroyed.

-- A combined force detained a Haqqani leader and called in an airstrike that killed several insurgents in the Jaji district of Pakiya province. The Haqqani leader coordinated roadside bombings and indirect-fire attacks against Afghan and coalition forces. He also provided weapons, including IEDs, to insurgents.

-- A combined force detained a Taliban facilitator and one other insurgent in the Baraki Barak district of Logar province. The facilitator supplied weapons, ammunition and equipment to insurgents for attacks against Afghan and coalition troops.

-- A combined force detained several suspects during a search for a Taliban leader in the Wali Muhammad Shahid Khugyani district of Ghazni province. The sought-after insurgent leader plans and conducts roadside bombings against Afghan and coalition forces along Highway 1.

In May 23 operations:

-- A combined force discovered a cache containing 12 IEDs, two mines and seven jugs filled with homemade explosives in the Zharay district of Kandahar province.

-- A combined force killed six insurgents during a firefight in the Pul-E Alam district of Logar province. Some small arms and a radio device were recovered from the insurgents.

-- A combined force detained eight insurgents in the Terezayi district of Khowst province.

-- A combined force detained four insurgents in the Sabari district of Khowst province after finding three IEDs and four loaded AK-47 rifles in their vehicle.

-- A combined force called in an airstrike that killed two insurgents, including Jamil Ur Rahman, a senior insurgent leader, during an operation in the Waygal district of Nuristan province. Rahman had provided leadership and coordinated insurgent activities across eastern Afghanistan.

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-- A combined force discovered a weapons cache containing 50 pounds of homemade explosives, five 120 mm mortar rounds and some small-arms ammunition in the Mizan district of Zabul province.

-- In the Shindand district of Herat province, a combined force discovered a weapons cache containing seven cluster bombs,

12 82 mm mortar rounds, one 107 mm rocket and 10 rocket engine boosters. The cache was destroyed.

In May 21 operations:

-- In the Kajaki district of Helmand province, a combined force killed several insurgents and destroyed 3,102 pounds of poppy seed, 484 pounds of wet opium, 22 pounds of ammonium nitrate and drug production equipment.

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8. [Attack, Somalia] Fresh Somali Clashes Kill Nine, Injure Six In SW Capital

Friday, May 18 2012

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/05/18/241854/fresh-clashes-kill-nine-in-sw-somali/>

Clashes between al-Shabab fighters and Somali government forces in Gedo, southwest of the capital city of Mogadishu, have left at least nine people dead and six others injured, Press TV reports.

The conflicts reportedly broke out late on Tuesday continuing overnight into early Wednesday when al-Shabab fighters attacked Garbaharey district, targeting Somali government forces using mortar shells and artillery fire.

“Clashes broke out last night [on Tuesday night] [and continued] until today [Wednesday] morning. The insurgent forces attacked TFG [Transitional Federal Government] positions in Argada neighborhood. In the morning, I saw nine dead bodies and more than six others were admitted to hospitals,” Abdishakur Aden, a Garbaharey resident told Press TV correspondent in Somalia.

Somali government authorities have confirmed the deadly clashes between al-Shabab fighters and the government forces claiming that they have successfully repelled the attacks.

“Al-Shabab attacked our bases but we defeated them and we are still in control of the areas, we have killed dozens of rebel fighters,” said Mohamed Abdi Kalil, government-appointed governor of Gedo.

On the other hand, al-Shabab commanders have refuted Kalil’s statements saying that their forces are still fighting in the town.

Garbaharey town is located in the western region of Gedo close to the country’s borders with its neighbors Ethiopia and Kenya.

The war torn African country has been scene of decades-long ceaseless civil strife erupting after the ouster of the country’s former President Mohamed Siad Barre.

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9. [Attack, Somalia] Bombs Kill Somali Soldiers In Mogadishu

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18134391>

Somali government soldiers are among five people killed in two bombings in the capital Mogadishu, attacks blamed on al-Shabab Islamist fighters.

A bomb planted under a tree in the north of the city killed at least three soldiers and one pedestrian, security officials said.

In the other attack, a bomb, possibly a grenade, killed at least one person in Bakara market area.

Al-Shabab has continued attacks since retreating from view last year.

Outside the capital, it still controls huge swathes of the country.

Government and African Union troops control Mogadishu while most of the rest of the country is under Islamist control.

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10. [Security, Nigeria] JTF Destroys Boko Haram Hideout In Jos

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/05/jtf-destroys-boko-haram-hideout-in-jos/>

A hideout used by members of the Boko Haram sect was on Saturday destroyed by a combined team of the military and other security agencies in Rikkos area of Jos. The brownish colour three-bedroom flat, with boys' quarter, was fortified with high steel gate and fence in the ghetto area of Jos before it was demolished by a bulldozer on Saturday.



The operation commenced on Wednesday night by a combined team of military Joint Task Force (JTF) from Maiduguri, military Special Task Force (STF) in Plateau, the police and the State Security Services (SSS). A source told newsmen that a man suspected to live in the house was trailed by the JTF men from Borno and were later joined by the STF men in Plateau and other security agencies.

“At about 3.00 a.m. of May 17, a hideout of the Boko Haram terrorists was discovered in Rikkos area of Jos where six women and 11 children of Boko Haram members were kept.

“They have been rescued for investigations and rehabilitation,” Capt. Mdahyelya Markus, spokesman of the STF, told newsmen on Saturday in Jos after the operation at about 7.00 p.m.

According to Markus, items recovered from the three-bedroom bungalow include a laptop computer, external hard disk, eight cell phones, 23 sim cards and 19 prepared improvised explosive detonators. He said, “Further search on the house at about 6.30am of May 19, revealed one AK-47 rifle, four magazines fully loaded with 7.62mm special ammunition and 150 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition.

“Other things recovered are 347 rounds of 9mm ammunition, eight bags of Urea Nitrate fertiliser, two generators, four improvised explosive devices, 395 Sniper ammo and 60m of Cortex wire.



“Four containers of sodium oxide, one potassium chloride, three lead nitrate, two aluminium metal powder, one remote control, chromic cat-cut and white sulphurs were also discovered.”

Markus said that one improvised explosive device detonated during the search on the house but that no body was injured.

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11. [Law Enforcement, Nigeria] Suspected Suicide Bomber Arrested At Ministerial Briefing Venue

Monday, May 21 2012

http://ediaro.com/wrd/suicide-bomber-arrested-at-ministerial-briefing-venue-radio-house-abuja/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=suicide-bomber-arrested-at-ministerial-briefing-venue-radio-house-abuja

A man has been arrested today with bombs – 3 hand grenades and bullets and some round of ammunitions at the venue of the ministerial platform at Radio house,Area 10 Abuja – the venue of the ongoing ministerial briefings.

The briefings, which has been holding for the past two weeks is coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Information – as part of their preparations for May 29 “Democracy Day 2012”.

Security operatives screening visitors to the building, which also houses the Federal Ministry of Information, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), Voice of Nigeria and Kapital FM, suspected, the bag he was carrying at the point of screening. On further scrutiny, they found a grenade and some rounds of ammunition. When he was challenged, he said he was given the bag by an unnamed woman – who asked him to deliver it to someone at the venue of the briefing.

The Chief Security Officer at Radio House, Mr. James Akindele, told reporters that the suspect was arrested at the main entrance.

Akindele said, “This afternoon, our operatives arrested a man with rounds of 7.7 mm live ammunition and three 86 hand grenades, all concealed in a polythene bag and put in a black bag. He said “We have not interrogated him, we just apprehended him. What we want to do now is to hand him over to the police for further investigation and then you will all get to know more about his case.”

The suspect was later taken to the Police station while proceedings at the Ministerial platform continued.Among those present at the Ministerial briefing to give their scoreboards are – The Youth Development and Sports Minister (Bolaji Abdullahi), The Ministers of Justice (Bello Adoke) and Aviation Minister (Stella Oduah).



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12. [Law Enforcement, Nigeria] Two Bombers Arrested In Nigeria's Capital

Tuesday, May 22 2012

http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/two-bombers-arrested-in-nigeria-s-capital-police_776881.html

Two men who were about to bomb the police headquarters and Radio House which houses several government broadcast stations in the capital city here, were arrested on Tuesday, Nigerian police said.

They were said to have been apprehended moments before they were about to carry out suicide bombings.

The man arrested at the police headquarters was said to have laced his body with some explosives and hand grenades but was detected through some security gadgets.

"As soon as the terrorist, Abdulsalaam Salihu, alighted from the vehicle that brought him nearby the premises, the gadgets beeped and alerted the security operatives," police said.

He was arrested and was later taken to the intelligence unit for questioning.

A second person, John Akpafan Alakpo, was said to have headed for the National Press Center in the Radio House where the Aviation Minister, Stella Ogiemwonyi Oduah and Youths and Sports Minister , Bolaji Abdullahi were rendering accounts of their stewardship.

A statement from federal police command said officers recovered 37 rifle rounds and three grenades after Alakpo's arrest, but did not offer any details about why the man carried the weapons onto the ministry's grounds.

"He is in our custody, but we are not talking about it. We are investigating," Police spokesman, Ade Shinaba said while confirming his arrest.

Nigeria has been under increasing attack by a radical Islamist sect known as Boko Haram, which has been blamed for more than 520 killings this year alone.

The sect says it has an avowed mission of turning the country into an Islamic state with Sharia rule. But some analysts think there are political motives behind its attacks.

Nigeria has a 180 million population evenly divided among Christians and Muslims with the former mostly found in the South while the latter has most members in the North.

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13. [Attack, Nigeria] Five Killed In Nigeria's Troubled Northeast

Tuesday, May 22 2012

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/killed-separate-northeast-nigeria-attacks-16399015#.T7vcKll7uSo>

Authorities say five people have died in attacks in Nigeria's troubled northeast.

A Nigerian Red Cross report said a Tuesday blast killed four civilians in the besieged city of Maiduguri. It said rescuers took six people injured in the blast to a nearby hospital.

Meanwhile, Borno state police spokesman Samuel Tizhe said gunmen entered an officer's home and shot him dead Tuesday in another part of town.

Police said they believe members of a feared radical sect known as Boko Haram killed the police officer, but they declined to immediately comment on the blast.

Boko Haram is waging an increasingly bloody sectarian struggle against Nigeria's weak central government. The sect is held responsible for more than 520 deaths this year alone according to an Associated Press count.

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14. [Special Interest, Somalia] Progress Claimed Against Al-Shabab In Somalia

Wednesday, May 23 2012

<http://www.voanews.com/content/african-union-forces-claim-progress-against-al-shabab-somalia/940106.html>

African Union and Somali government troops are said to be nearing victory in a lightning offensive against al-Shabab insurgents northwest of Somalia's capital, Mogadishu.

A statement issued Wednesday says African Union forces made "significant progress" in the first 24 hours of an operation in the strategic Afgoye corridor between Mogadishu and the regional capital of Baidoa.

The statement says a senior al-Shabab rebel commander was killed during the fighting and a convoy of cars in which he was traveling was destroyed. It gave no further details, but other top officials linked to al-Qaida have been the targets of drone strikes.

Somalia's Defense Minister Hussein Arab Essa told VOA the first stage of the AMISOM offensive is almost complete.

"They successfully conducted an operation where they inflicted huge damage to al-Shabab and al-Qaida and captured new territories toward Afgoye, and we are hopeful in next 24 to 48 hours we will capture Afgoye and go even further," said Essa.



The heaviest fighting is reported in an area that is home to the largest community of internally displaced people in the world. Four hundred thousand people forced from their homes by famine and war are said to be surviving in squalid camps.

Essa said the two-fold objective of the offensive is to secure the Mogadishu-Afgoye road, and to ensure the safety of civilians.

"The targets are to make sure we connect all regions of Somalia and that operation is on target. However, our mission is always to make sure the safety of the population in the area where the attacks are going to be," said Essa, who spoke to reporters at African Union headquarters, where he is attending talks on Somalia's political transition.

Al-Shabab has held the Afgoye corridor for years in its campaign to topple Somalia's United Nations-backed transitional government. But after being driven out of Mogadishu earlier this year, the rebels have been forced to retreat to their mostly rural strongholds.

Al-Shabab's military weakness has given rise to hope that the political process currently underway might lead to establishment of Somalia's first elected government by August.

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15. [Security, Lebanon] Explosive Devices, Weapons Seized Near Ain Al-Helweh Camp

Friday, May 18 2012

<http://www.lbcgroup.tv/news/30890/explosive-devices-weapons-seized-near-ain-al-helwe>

The LAF intelligence branch seized on Thursday night a scarp truck carrying ammunition and explosive devices as well as a Grad rockets and mortar shells.

Palestinian Mohammad Hassan al-Far, the truck's driver, was arrested near the entrance to Ain al-Helweh camp.

The intelligence also arrested a Lebanese national that was supposed to receive the ammunition from the Palestinian.



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16. [Attack, Iraq] Explosions At Baghdad Bird Market Kill At Least Five

Friday, May 18 2012

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/18/iraq-bomb-blasts-bird-market_n_1526595.html

Three bombs struck near simultaneously at a busy bird market in eastern Baghdad on Friday morning, killing five people and wounding dozens, police and health officials said.

Two police officials said the bird market in the Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City was crowded with shoppers when the bombs exploded at around 7:00 a.m. At least 37 people were wounded in the blasts, officials said.

A hospital official confirmed the casualty toll.

Every Friday, thousands of Iraqis converge on pet markets to shop and spend some relaxing family time during the Muslim weekend. The markets are one of the favorite targets for militants who seek to inflict large numbers of casualties.

In the Shiite neighborhood of Khazimiyah in northern Baghdad, gunmen killed an Iraqi police captain, his wife, two daughters and son at the family's home, officials said.

All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Violence has ebbed in Iraq, but insurgents carry out frequent attacks on security forces and civilians in an attempt to undermine the Shiite-led government.

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17. [Attack, Syria] Suicide Car Bomb Explodes Near Military Compound In Syrian City, Government Says

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/05/19/suicide-car-bomb-explodes-near-military-compound-in-syrian-city-government-says/>

A suicide vehicle bomb tore through the parking lot of a military compound in an eastern Syrian city on Saturday, killing nine people in the latest in a series of blasts in recent months targeting security installations, the country's state media reported.

State TV showed footage of damaged buildings, smoldering cars, and trucks turned upside down. Debris filled a street that was stained with blood.

Attacks such as the blast in Deir al-Zour, a former transit hub for militants heading to fight U.S. forces in nearby Iraq, have raised fears that Al Qaeda-linked jihadis, possibly including Iraqis, have made strong inroads into Syria's rebel movement.

The report said the vehicle was rigged with 2,200 pounds of explosives and did heavy damage to buildings up to 100 yards away. It added that the explosion left a crater five meters wide and 2 1/2 meters deep.

The state-run news agency SANA said the blast hit the parking lot of a military residential compound, while an opposition group, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, reported that the bomb went off close to the city branches of the Military Intelligence Directorate and Air Force Intelligence. State TV said U.N. observers based in the city visited the site of the blast.

No one claimed responsibility for Saturday's attack. A group calling itself the Al-Nusra Front has claimed some previous attacks through statements posted on militant websites. Little is known about the group, although Western intelligence officials say it could be a front for a branch of Al Qaeda militants from Iraq operating in Syria.

The most recent bombing targeted an intelligence building in Damascus on May 10. It struck during morning rush hour and the high death toll — some 55 people — made it the deadliest such attack since the uprising against President Bashar Assad's regime began in March of last year.

Some of the tactics used in Damascus — a small blast drawing attention prior to a larger one — were reminiscent of Al Qaeda attacks during Iraq's insurgency.

On Thursday, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he believes that "alarmingly and surprisingly," Al Qaeda must have been behind the May 10 attack in the Syrian capital.

"The recent terrorist attacks in Damascus suggest that these attacks were carefully orchestrated," he said. "Having seen the scale and sophistication of these terrorist attacks, one might think that this terrorist attack was done by a certain group with organization and clear intent."

Deir el-Zour city is about 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the Iraqi border. Saturday's blast came a day after the state-run news agency SANA reported that authorities foiled an attempt to blow up a car rigged with explosives in the city and detained those involved.

Deir el-Zour province, of which the city is the provincial capital, was a major crossing point for jihadis traveling to Iraq to fight after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. During the war, the U.S. and the Iraqi government repeatedly accused Syria of allowing foreign fighters from across the Arab world to pass through, but Damascus said it could not stop smuggling networks from crossing the long desert border.

In 2008, a cross-border raid by U.S. special forces killed the Al Qaeda-linked head of a smuggling network and seven other people in the province.



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18. [Attack, Syria] Bomb Explodes During UN Visit In Syria

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://news.yahoo.com/bomb-explodes-during-un-visit-syria-173547316.html>

A roadside bomb exploded in a restive suburb of the Syrian capital as senior U.N. officials toured the area on Sunday, the latest incident in which the unarmed observer mission has nearly been caught up in the country's bloodshed.

No casualties were reported in the blast, which detonated about 150 meters (500 feet) away from visiting U.N. peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous and Maj. Gen. Robert Mood, the chief of U.N. observers in Syria. Journalists accompanying the team also were nearby. The explosion blew off the front of a parked vehicle.

A U.N. observer team with more than 250 members now on the ground has failed to quell the bloodshed in Syria, although it says it has had a "calming effect" in certain areas.

Meanwhile, on several occasions, the team has come close to being caught in an attack, although there is no conclusive proof that it has been targeted.

Earlier this month, a bomb targeting an army truck exploded seconds after a convoy carrying Mood went past in the country's south. Last week, a roadside bomb damaged the mission's cars in a northern town just minutes after witnesses said regime forces gunned down mourners at a funeral procession nearby.

It was not immediately clear what the target of Sunday's explosion was, but the damaged car was parked near a security checkpoint in the suburb of Douma.

A security official at the checkpoint told the U.N. observers that gunmen had targeted two military buses in Douma earlier in the day, wounding more than 30 security agents.

"We obviously don't have the specifics about what happened here this morning," Mood said Sunday.

Ladsous gave a grim assessment of conditions for civilians in Douma, the scene of repeated clashes between security forces and rebels in recent months.

"The city (Douma) is completely paralyzed," Ladsous said. "There is still some fighting taking place. ... It's absolutely imperative that all parties exercise restraint and don't engage into any more fighting. It serves nothing."

Activists reported heavy shelling Sunday in the town of Soran in the central Hama province. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights called on the international observers to visit Soran and investigate reports of more than a dozen killed.

In Damascus, opposition groups reported fighting overnight between government forces and army defectors in the district of Kfar Souseh, a hotbed of dissent against President Bashar Assad's regime. The

district is a high security area, housing the Foreign Ministry and several security and intelligence agencies. It has also been the scene of frequent anti-Assad demonstrations since the uprising began.

"Violent clashes broke out between rebel fighters and regime troops at a checkpoint in Kfar Souseh district," the Observatory said in a statement. Both the Observatory and another activist group, the Local Coordination Committees, said explosions and gunfire were also heard in several other neighborhoods of Damascus.

Syrian rebels claimed in an Internet statement that they carried out a sophisticated attack that killed top political and security officials meeting in the capital. The posting claimed those killed included Maj. Gen. Assef Shawkat, the deputy chief of staff for security affairs; Defense Minister Dawoud Rajha; Interior Minister Mohammad al-Shaar and former defense minister, Hassan Turkmani.

Several of those officials reported killed subsequently showed up in public to refute the claims. Al-Shaar denied them at a press conference. Turkmani was interviewed by state-run Syrian TV in his office and said the claims were "blatant lies." Syrian officials rarely respond to statements issued by the opposition and their quick denials on Sunday were unusual.

The revolt against Assad's regime started in March 2011 with mostly peaceful protests calling for political change. The deadly government crackdown led many opposition supporters to take up arms.

Now, the regime is facing an armed insurgency targeting government installations, soldiers and security forces.

In March, the U.N. said that 9,000 people had been killed. Hundreds more have died since. Clashes in the heart of the Syrian capital have become more common recently but are still rare compared to other opposition strongholds in Syria that witness deadly violence almost daily.

A cease-fire that was supposed to start last month has never really taken hold, undermining the rest of international envoy Kofi Annan's plan, which is supposed to lead to talks to end the 15-month crisis.

World powers remain divided on how to end Syria's crisis. The U.S. and other Western and Arab nations have called for Assad to leave power, and the U.S. and European Union have placed increasingly stiff sanctions on Damascus.

But with Russia and China blocking significant new U.N. punishments, U.S. officials are trying to get consensus among other allies about ways to promote Assad's ouster.

Also Sunday, an anti-Syrian cleric and his bodyguard were shot dead in neighboring Lebanon, where a spillover of Syria's conflict has inflamed tensions and triggered deadly sectarian fighting in recent days. The two were on their way to a rally in a remote northern Sunni region when they were shot.

The circumstances surrounding their deaths remain unclear but the state-run National News Agency said Sheik Ahmed Abdul-Wahid and his guard appeared to have been killed by soldiers after their convoy failed to stop at an army checkpoint.

The deaths could add to the tensions between pro and anti-Syrian groups in the region, and there were fears of clashes breaking out as the cleric's supporters blocked roads with burning tires in protest. The Lebanese army issued a statement, saying it deeply regretted the incident and that a committee will investigate.

Clashes between pro- and anti-Syrian groups in the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli left eight people and dozens wounded this week.

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19. [Security, Egypt] Egypt Intercepts Shipment Of Rockets Destined For Gaza Strip

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-20/egypt-intercepts-shipment-of-rockets-destined-for-gaza-strip.html>

Egyptian security forces seized a weapons cache that includes 191 rockets that were believed headed for Gaza, the Interior Ministry said.

Three men were arrested after some of the weapons, which included anti-aircraft and Grad rockets, were found in two vehicles, the ministry said in an e-mailed statement today. The rest, which were believed smuggled in from Libya, were found in a storage facility, the statement said.

The seizure was the latest in a series of similar discoveries of weapons that Egyptian authorities maintain are being routed into the country from Libya. Security in Egypt's western neighbor has yet to be restored months after a bloody uprising that ended with the ouster and subsequent death of longtime Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.

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20. [Attack, Yemen] Suicide Bomb Leaves Scores Dead At Yemen Military Parade

Monday, May 21 2012

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-21/blast-hits-military-parade-in-yemen-s-capital-ministry-says-1-.html>

A suicide bomber killed scores of people in Sana'a as servicemen rehearsed for a military parade near the presidential palace, a Yemeni police official said.

The blast killed at least 75 people and injured about 120, according to the official, who declined to be identified in accordance with government policy. Al Arabiya television said 96 people died. No group immediately claimed responsibility. The attack took place in the presence of Defense Minister Mohammed Naser Ahmed and Chief of Staff Ahmed al-Ashwal, who were uninjured, the ministry said on its website.

Yemen's army has been battling al-Qaeda militants as the government under President Abdurabuh Mansur Hadi fights to recapture cities in the southern province of Abyan. Government forces and allied fighters forced al-Qaeda militants to flee the suburbs outside the city of Lawdar on May 17.

"There has been a call for al-Qaeda to strike at authorities in Sana'a in response to their offensive in the south," Theodore Karasik, director of research at the Dubai-based Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis, said in a phone interview.

The suicide bomber, wearing an army uniform, struck near the entrance to the palace, after which security forces closed access to the area and state television broadcast phone calls from officials and citizens denouncing the attack. The army was preparing for the National Day of Unification tomorrow which marks the creation of Yemen through the merger of the south and north in 1990.

'Heinous Crime'

"This is a heinous crime that is meant to destroy the country and turn us into another Afghanistan," Ahmed al-Kamal, a soldier at the parade ground, said in an interview. "We will not give in to terrorism and will continue to celebrate our unity day."

The explosion was "a bloody terrorist attack and shows the ugly face" of the attackers, said Najeeb Alsharabi, a 34 year-old blacksmith in an interview. "What is the crime of these slain soldiers?"

Yemen, bordering Saudi Arabia and Oman at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is struggling to recover from protests that weakened the central government's authority and forced Ali Abdullah Saleh, who ruled the country for more than three decades, to cede power last year. Hadi was elected president in February.

Oil Pipeline Attacks

Yemen's army has fought separatist groups in the south and Shiite Muslim rebels in the north, as well as al-Qaeda. Attacks on the country's main oil pipeline have cost \$2.5 billion in lost revenue, the oil and minerals minister, Hisham Sharaf, said last week.

The conflict in Yemen has raised concern of a weakened central government, mirroring the situation in Somalia across the Gulf of Aden, where there's been no functioning administration since 1991. Somalia has become a staging post for pirates who attack merchant shipping lanes.

Three U.S. Coast Guard trainers were attacked yesterday while driving near their hotel in the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah in western Yemen, an Interior Ministry official said, declining to be identified in accordance with government policy. One was wounded in the neck, the official said.

"Reports of U.S. military trainers in Hodeidah are false," the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a said in a statement, without referring directly to Coast Guard personnel.

White House counterterrorism adviser John Brennan visited on May 13 to discuss "extremist groups" and U.S. assistance with Yemeni officials, according to a U.S. Embassy statement at the time. Brennan's visit followed the disruption of a conspiracy by Yemen-based al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula to build a potentially undetectable bomb in the month before the anniversary of Osama bin Laden's death.

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21. [Attack, Syria] Bomb Kills Five In Syrian Capital

Tuesday, May 22 2012

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2115429,00.html>

Activists and state media say a bomb has exploded in the Syrian capital, killing at least five people.

The blast appears to have targeted a restaurant, according to photographs released Tuesday by the state-run news agency SANA.

SANA and the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights activist group said the blast occurred late Monday in the Damascus neighborhood of Qaboun.

Qaboun has been the site of anti-government protests since the uprising against President Bashar Assad's regime began in March 2011.

The tightly-controlled Syrian capital has been hit by a wave of explosions, mostly targeting security agencies.

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22. [Attack, Iraq] Three Lebanese Pilgrims Killed In Iraq Bombing

Wednesday, May 23 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/23/us-iraq-violence-lebanese-idUSBRE84M0ZZ20120523>

At least three Lebanese Shi'ite pilgrims were killed and seven wounded on Wednesday when a roadside bomb exploded near their bus in the Iraqi city of Ramadi, a police source said.

The attack in Ramadi, the capital of mainly Sunni Anbar province and a former al-Qaeda stronghold, raised fears of renewed sectarian violence.

The bus, carrying 45 Lebanese pilgrims, was heading to Baghdad from Syria, the source said.

"A roadside bomb exploded near a bus carrying Lebanese pilgrims coming to Iraq, probably to visit the sacred shrines in Iraq," said the source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Violence has eased in Iraq since the height of the war in 2006 to 2007 when tens of thousands were killed as Sunni and Shi'ite militants fought one another.

But Sunni militants linked to al Qaeda remain a potent force, and often attack security forces and Shi'ite targets in an attempt to stir up sectarian tensions.

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23. [Security, Yemen] Al Qaeda Militants Killed In Yemen Clashes, Officials Say

Friday, May 25 2012

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/05/25/world/meast/yemen-violence/index.html>

Thirty-eight al Qaeda militants were killed in clashes with Yemen's military, local security officials said Friday.

At least 15 troops also died in the violence Thursday morning in the southern provinces of Abyan and Lahjj, the officials said.

Dozens were also wounded in a fierce battle involving several army brigades and the air force, state-run news agency SABA said. Militant leaders and foreign elements were among those killed, the news agency said.

The Yemeni government this week blamed an affiliate of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula for a massive suicide bombing Monday that killed more than 100 soldiers.

Jihadist websites posted a statement purportedly from the group, Ansaar al-Sharia, claiming responsibility for the attack. But CNN could not independently verify the authenticity of the statement.

The partially lawless Middle Eastern country has become a central battleground in the fight against al Qaeda. The terror network's leader recently called for an uprising against the nation's new president.

The Yemeni branch of the group calls itself al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula; Ansaar al-Sharia is an affiliate of AQAP.

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24. [Special Interest, Syria] U.S. To Consider Sending Weapons To Opposition Fighters In Syria

Friday, May 25 2012

http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2012/05/us_to_consider_sending_weapons.html

As one diplomatic effort after another fails to end more than a year of brutal violence in Syria, the Obama administration is preparing a plan that would essentially give U.S. nods of approval to arms transfers from Arab nations to some Syrian opposition fighters.

The effort, U.S. officials told the Associated Press, would vet members of the Free Syrian Army and other groups to determine whether they are suitable recipients of munitions to fight the Assad government and to ensure that weapons don't wind up in the hands of al Qaeda-linked terrorists or other extremist groups such as Hezbollah that could target Israel.

The plan, which has not been finalized, reflects U.S. frustration that none of the previous efforts — including diplomatic rhetoric from the United Nations and the multinational Friends of Syria group, and special envoy Kofi Annan's plan for a cease-fire — has even begun to nudge President Bashar Assad from power. The vetting would be the first tiny step the United States has made toward ensuring that Syria doesn't fall into a full sectarian conflict.

BEST OF A BAD IDEA

While some intelligence analysts worry that there may be no suitable recipients of lethal aid in the Syria conflict, the vetting plan has arisen as the least objectionable idea in a complicated situation.

U.S. officials, most of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the subject, stressed that the United States, which is already providing nonlethal aid to Syria's political opposition, is not supplying military assistance to Assad's foes.

The administration's position remains that adding more weapons to the conflict is a bad idea and will only fan the fire of instability.

"We don't think that adding fuel to this fire is the right way to go," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

"Our decision is to support the civilian opposition in nonlethal ways," she said. "There are other countries who have made other decisions. That's their sovereign decision to make. "

But she added: "We are obviously consulting with various states about the decisions that we've made, that they've made."

INEVITABLE MOVE

Privately, officials say that as conditions continue to deteriorate, it would be irresponsible not to weigh in with Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and others such as Turkey that have indicated interest in arming the rebels.

By some accounts, those nations already have begun to ship weapons with tacit U.S. agreement. In Turkey, private businessmen have begun funneling weapons into Syria.



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25. [Attack, Italy] Bomb Kills One Student, Wounds Seven In Italy

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5i0Y6kVko3EzeWZJcZJKZjy798jFg?docId=56ac5930a19b4ff2b0ab0fbbdc0cbc15>

A bomb exploded outside an Italian high school named after the wife of an assassinated anti-Mafia prosecutor, killing one student and wounding at least seven others, officials said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, and police were trying to determine who had planted the bomb. But an anti-Mafia prosecutor said it didn't appear to be the kind of attack that organized crime has carried out in Italy. The bombing also followed a spate of attacks against Italian officials and buildings by a group of anarchists.

The device went off a few minutes before 8 a.m. on Saturday in the Adriatic port town of Brindisi in the country's south just as students milled outside, chatting and getting ready for class at the mainly all-girls Francesca Laura Morvillo Falcone vocational institute. Saturday is a school day in much of Italy.

The school — which prepares students for jobs in fashion, tourism and social services — is named in honor of Morvillo, a judge who died along with her husband, anti-Mafia prosecutor Giovanni Falcone, in a 1992 highway bombing in Sicily by the Cosa Nostra.

The student killed by the bomb was Melissa Bassi, 16, known to her friends in Brindisi for her sunny smile and dream of becoming a fashion designer, said Franco Scoditti, the mayor of the nearby town of Mesagne. She died of her wounds at a hospital, said Brindisi civil protection agency official Fabiano Amati.

One of the shaken students who witnessed the attack told reporters that a wounded girl, her hair charred, screamed the name "Melissa, Melissa" when she realized her friend was severely hurt. Bassi, along with several friends, had just gotten off a bus from Mesagne that took them to their school.

Amati said at least seven students were hospitalized, but some news reports put the figure at 10.

Graziella Di Bella, the health director at Perrino Hospital, said most of them suffered burns and shrapnel-like wounds, and several were undergoing surgery.

"The explosion sent out fragments and flames ... pieces of iron," Di Bella told Sky TG24 TV. She said four psychologists were working with the students. "One of the (injured) girls asked me: 'What do we have to do with this?'" Di Bella said, adding the students were feeling a sense of "disorientation, terror" and anger.

"It's pure terrorism," said Italy's national anti-Mafia prosecutor Piero Grasso after consulting in Brindisi with investigators. He sounded angry as he left the scene of the bombing. "May no one touch our kids!" he shouted as he got into a car.

Dr. Paola Ciannamea, a Perrino Hospital physician who helped treat the wounded, told reporters that one of them was a teenage girl who was in a grave but stable condition after surgery.

Premier Mario Monti, from the sidelines of the Group of Eight summit in the United States, said he hopes the wounded quickly recover.

Anti-Mafia prosecutor Cataldo Motta, based in the nearby port of Lecce, told reporters there were no claims of responsibility. He added that the bombing didn't appear to be the work of organized crime, since fuel and not dynamite, the Mafia's traditional choice of explosive, was used. Motta said the "international terrorism" angle was unlikely, but stressed that investigators had not ruled out any hypothesis.

Italy has been marking the 20th anniversary of the attack on the Sicilian highway that killed the prosecutor and his wife, but it was unclear if there was an organized crime link to Saturday's explosion.

Interior Minister Anna Maria Cancellieri, in charge of domestic security, said she was "struck" by the fact that the school was named after the slain hero and his wife, but she cautioned that investigators at that point "have no elements" to blame the school attack on organized crime.

"It's not the usual (method) for the Mafia," she told Sky in a phone interview. The Sicilian-based Cosa Nostra usually targets specific figures, such as judges, prosecutors, turncoats or rival mobsters in attacks, and not civilian targets such as schools.

Saturday's bombing is an attack of "unprecedented cruelty. The big problem now is to get intelligence" on the bombing, said Cancellieri.

National police chief Antonio Manganelli told Sky TG24 that Italy's "best investigators" had been dispatched to Brindisi.

Outside the school, textbooks and notebooks, their pages fluttering in the breeze, and a backpack littered the street near where the bomb exploded. At the sound of the blast, students inside the school ran outside to see what had happened.

Officials initially said the bomb was in a trash bin outside the school, but later the Italian news agency ANSA said the device was placed on a low wall ringing the building and near the bin. The wall was damaged and charred from the blast. Sky TG24 said the device included three containers of fuel.

The school's principal, Angelo Rampino said the bomb, which reportedly had a timer component, went off at a time when students are known to be flocking to school. "It was done to kill the girls," said Rampino .

The bombing follows a spate of attacks against Italian officials and government or public buildings by a group of anarchists, including the shooting and wounding of an official from a nuclear engineering firm, which is part of a state-controlled company. An anti-nuclear anarchist group that previously had targeted Italy's tax collection agency claimed responsibility for the shooting.

Authorities have said the Italian anarchists have worked in close contact with Greece-based anarchists. Brindisi is a major point of departure for ferries between Italy and Greece, but there was no immediate indication from investigators of any Greek link.

The attacks and threats lodged against authorities prompted the government earlier in the week to assign bodyguards to 550 individuals, and deploy 16,000 law enforcement officers nationwide.

Brindisi is a lively port town in Puglia, the region in the southeastern "heel" of the Italian boot-shaped peninsula. An organized crime syndicate known as the Sacred United Crown has been traditionally active there, but crackdowns have been widely considered by authorities to have reduced the organization's power.



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26. [Security, Northern Ireland] Residents Outraged As Bombs Are Found In Derry Flats

Wednesday, May 23 2012

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/residents-outraged-as-bombs-are-found-in-derry-flats-16162524.html>

Stunned residents of one of Londonderry's most densely populated housing areas have vented their anger at those who set up a suspected bomb factory there. Dozens of families were evacuated or forced to huddle at the back of their properties following a major security alert in the Maureen Avenue area close to the city centre. Many were ordered out of their homes as Army Technical Officers were scrambled to deal with a series of unexploded bombs found in a first floor flat.

One man in his 30s has been arrested on suspicion of dissident republican activity in connection with the unexploded devices.

The bombs were made safe before being taken away for tests, but much of the street remained cordoned off well into yesterday evening as forensic searches were conducted. Those who lived there said they were shocked and disgusted that bombs had been discovered in such a built-up, residential area.

Several also raised questions over emergency evacuation procedures, saying that people were told to go to a local hotel, only to be informed on arrival that they weren't being accommodated.

It is understood a bus was arranged to take the evacuees from the hotel to Brooke Park leisure centre — but almost all arranged to stay with friends or relatives.

One man decided to take his pet King Charles spaniel and sleep in his car at a beach in Inishowen, Co Donegal.

Another woman said she had to take a terrified eight-year-old boy into her care after he became separated from his grandfather, who was inside the flats.

Gerry Murray (78) lives opposite the flats with his wife.

"They told us we didn't have to leave we could go to the back of the house so we stayed. The word went round that they had found some bomb-making material," he said.

"I think it's a disgrace to put a bomb in a built-up area like this. It's definitely a thing you don't want around you. We are two elderly people and there are others, and young children here, but these people don't think of that."

A mother who lives on Maureen Avenue said she didn't initially hear the commotion.

"I didn't know what was going on and a policeman came to the door and asked us to go to the back of the house," she said.

“But these houses aren’t really designed like that. There is nothing at the back and I thought it was better to go so we went and stayed elsewhere. It’s crazy to think people would do this when there are so many people in this area. There are houses and flats everywhere here.”

Another resident said that emergency procedures needed to be reviewed after the confusion caused.

He said: “Lots of people have come here this morning expecting to get back into their flats — but they are still cordoned off and that is on top of the whole mess with the hotel last night. A lot of people on medication couldn’t get their medication last night. There are a lot of vulnerable people living there, people with disabilities. They couldn’t get in to get their tablets.”

The woman who found the young boy added: “The wee lad couldn’t get in to his granda in Sheerin Court. The youngster was out in the street and I had to take responsibility for him. He was terrified. My son brought him a football to take his mind off it. Then we found out his grandfather had been evacuated up around the back of the flats and we were able to bring them together later on.”

SDLP councillor for the area John Boyle (left) said local people were “deeply shocked”.

“It is especially alarming that these devices were left in an apartment in a built-up area as that could have concentrated the damage caused had they exploded,” he said.

“There is no support in Derry for acts such as this and creating a culture of fear in the town cannot further any cause by so much as an inch. Those behind these devices are enemies of the community — they must be found and face the criminal justice system,” he added.

A stash of bombs in a Londonderry flat could have caused carnage if it had exploded, the police have said. Foyle PSNI Area Commander Garry Eaton confirmed that a number of other searches have been conducted since the discovery of the devices at Maureen Avenue on Monday night.

Searches at the scene continued yesterday. Dozens of families had been evacuated from their homes although the cordon was lifted last night.

Chief Inspector Eaton confirmed that one man in his 30s had been arrested on suspicion of dissident republican activity and was being questioned at Antrim Serious Crime suite.

At a Press conference yesterday, he said: “Following a police operation yesterday evening a number of viable devices were found in a residential premises. Following the discovery our immediate concerns were for the residents in the vicinity and the safety of our officers. We had to ensure the devices were made safe and await the arrival of ATO (Ammunition Technical Officers).”

He said that those behind the explosives were entirely responsible for the disruption, which saw dozens of families, including elderly and vulnerable people, forced from their homes.

“We are lucky now that we are not dealing with serious injuries or deaths,” he added.

“The fact that they were in a built-up area with children and elderly people is a disgrace.”

Mr Eaton refused to be drawn on the exact nature of the devices or how many were discovered.

The devices made safe by ATO have now been taken away for forensic examination.

Sinn Fein councillor for the Abercorn Road area, Mickey Cooper, said it was “absolutely ridiculous that in this day and age people have to put up with the stress and upset this has caused”.

Mr Cooper, who met with the residents who were forced to move out, said: “Those responsible for these actions should take stock of what the community is saying and cease these activities. There is no justification for these activities in the political climate in which we now live. Everyone now has access to a political course on which to articulate their goals and to seek support for them.”



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27. [Security, Bulgaria] Bulgaria To Transfer Fuse Bomb Technology To RI

Thursday, May 24 2012

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/05/24/bulgaria-transfer-fuse-bomb-technology-ri.html>

Indonesia will soon be ready to produce live bombs for fighter aircraft, particularly the Sukhoi 27 SK and 30 MK, as weapons manufacturer PT Sari Bahari Malang will receive technology from Bulgarian fuse-bomb producer Armaco.

Indonesia has only been able to produce casing, warheads and ammunition powder, while importing fuse bombs.

“This is a major step forward for Indonesia. From now on we will no longer depend on other countries because we are able to fulfill the Indonesian Military [TNI] needs of bombs,” company director Ricky Hendrik Egam told The Jakarta Post on Wednesday in Surabaya, East Java.

Ricky, however, refused to reveal the financial value of the cooperation between his company and Armaco.

He said that with the cooperation, Indonesia could also have the chance to provide fuse bombs for Asian countries that use Russian-made Sukhoi fighter jets.

The company has previously faced difficulties in finding countries producing fuse bombs that were willing to transfer the technology. China has rejected the company’s request for cooperation.

PT Sari Bahari has produced bombs for Sukhoi fighter jets, both smoke and live versions, with weights ranging from 100 kilograms to 250 kilograms. The company has also exported 70 millimeter smoke warhead rockets to the Chilean Air Force.

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28. [Security, India] Huge Cache Of Arms Recovered In Kashmir

Friday, May 18 2012

<http://www.business-standard.com/generalnews/news/huge-cachearms-recovered-in-kashmir/10781/>

Security forces today recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition from Kandi forest area in Kupwara district of north Kashmir, a defence spokesman said.

The seizure included an AK 56 Rifle, its one magazine with 18 rounds, an Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) with eight rounds, five rockets with a booster, four electric detonator, 14 IED Circuits and five Chinese grenades, the spokesman said.

The recovery was made on specific information from Kandi forest, about 100 kms from here, during a joint search operation by troops of 47 Rashtriya Rifles and Special Operations Group of local police.

The recovery has foiled another attempt of militants to use these explosives and weapons to initiate unrest in the region, the spokesman added.

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29. [Law Enforcement, India] Hizbul Mujahideen Militant Arrested In Pulwama

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=763079>

A Hizbul Mujahideen militant was arrested along with a cache of arms and explosives in Pulwama district of south Kashmir today, police said.

Tasaduq Rasool Mir, a resident of Ratnipora village, was arrested by a police team at Arigam crossing near Tral, 35 kms from here, a police spokesman said.

He said an Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) with a grenade, an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), a detonator and a Chinese grenade without cap and safety pin were recovered from Mir at the time of his arrest.

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30. [Attack, India] Four Cops Among 10 Hurt In J&K Grenade Attacks

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2012/20120520/main4.htm>

A day after the police recovered 70 kg IED on the outskirts of the city, suspected militants today carried out two grenade attacks in the Valley leaving 10 persons injured. No militant outfit has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

A youth wearing a college uniform lobbed a grenade towards the Sopore police station, 52 km from here in north Kashmir, at 9.50 am. The grenade exploded at the main gate of the police station, injuring four policemen and six pedestrians. The police suspect the involvement of the Lashkar-e-Toiba in the attack.

The explosion during morning rush hour created panic in the area and disrupted normal life. Search operations were launched in the area soon after the attack, but no arrests have been made so far.

The injured were shifted to the local hospital. Two policemen and an equal number of civilians were referred to hospitals here.

In the second incident, militants threw a grenade at a police picket in the busy Batamaloo area near the Civil Secretariat here this afternoon. The grenade missed its intended target and exploded on the roadside.

No one was hurt in the incident.

This is the first such attack in the area during the recent months and particularly after the Durbar moved to the summer capital early this month.

On Thursday evening, the police had averted a major tragedy by recovering 70 kg Improvised Explosive Device (IED) planted in a Maruti car on the Bypass near Chhanapora. The police said militants were trying to target the city with the onset of summer.

The police and 47 RR busted a militant hideout in Kandi forest area of Kupwara district in north Kashmir. One AK-56 rifle, one AK magazine, 18 rounds of AK ammunition, 20 Pika rounds, one UBGL, one IED circuit, one antenna, one IED switch, 8 UBGL rounds, five RPG rounds, one RPG booster, four electronic detonator and five Chinese grenades, were recovered from the hideout.

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31. [Security, India] Five Explosives Defused Near Railway Underbridge

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/article3438027.ece?textsize=small&test=2>

The Railway police defused five explosives found near a railway under bridge on Hyderabad-Mumbai railway line on the outskirts of Tellapur in Ramachandrapuram mandal, Medak district on Saturday. They were strapped to the railway track. Some gelatin sticks were also found near the spot.

According to sources, local villagers identified some material and wires below the rail under-bridge (RUB) and informed the railway officials. In turn, they alerted the railway police who rushed to the spot along with a bomb disposal squad, who defused the explosives. Police are yet to ascertain the intensity of the bombs. Railway Superintendent of Police B.L. Kantha Rao told The Hindu that there were five packets containing high explosive material – suspected to be ammonium nitrate – with about 20-metre fuse wire to detonate them. However, those who tried to connect them failed to complete the job, he added.

Police suspect that the Maoists, who observed a bandh on May 16, might have tried to detonate these explosive to make their presence felt in the area. Superintendent of Police Avinash Mohanthy said that it was not a professional's job. Nampally railway police registered a case.



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32. [Security, Russia] Nine Bombs With More Than 100Kg Of TNT Found In Dagestan

Sunday, May 20 2012

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20120520/173568737.html>

Police of the North Caucasus Republic of Dagestan found a bunker which hid nine bombs, seven of which with a total capacity of 105 kilograms of TNT, a spokesperson of National Anti-Terrorist Committee said on Sunday.

“Employees of law enforcement agency on Sunday during the inspection of the forest and the check up of operational information found a shelter in Dagestan's eastern Sergokalinsky district. There were seven homemade explosive devices with a capacity of 105 kilograms of TNT, two pressure-fused bombs, two Shmel flamethrowers, a large amount of ammunition and other weapons,” the spokesperson said.

Police also found components for making explosives, medicine and syringes.

According to National Anti-Terrorist Committee, the militants planned to use explosives to commit terrorist acts in Sergokalinsky and near-by regions of Dagestan.

“Special services were able to get information about the possible location of the shelter and were able to destroy it,” said in the committee.

More than a decade after the end of a federal war against separatists in Chechnya, Russian security forces continue to fight militants in the region. Terrorist attacks and shootouts with police are common in Dagestan and neighboring Chechnya and Ingushetia.

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33. [Security, India] Powerful IED Recovered In Assam District

Monday, May 21 2012

http://zeenews.india.com/news/assam/powerful-ied-recovered-in-assam-district_776748.html

A powerful IED weighing around 3.5 kg, meant to be planted either here or in Goalpara town, was seized from two ULFA linkmen who were arrested on the Assam-Meghalaya border in Goalpara district on Monday.

The linkmen Dilung alias Dilam Marak alias Bipimom Marak (30), a person from the Garo community of Meghalaya, and Jyoticharan Boro were arrested from the remote Landakunda area on the border which is close to Bangladesh, Goalpara ASP (headquarters) Susanta Biswa Sarma said.

Apart from the IED which was defused by the Army's Bomb Defusal Squad, a remote control device and a bomb-making manual were also recovered, Sarma, who led the operation, said.

The duo are believed to be close to Drishti Rajkhowa, a close aide of anti-talk faction leader Paresh Baruah, he said.

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34. [Attack, Turkey] Explosive Device Detonated Near Turkish Provincial Mayor's Car

Monday, May 21 2012

<http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/108400/>

An explosive device was detonated next to a mayor's automobile in Turkey's southern province of Hatay early on May 21 morning, Hurriyet Daily News reported.

Necmettin Acar, the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) mayor for Karaağaç, said he was at home watching television when he was jolted by a powerful explosion at around 3 am.

Acar said he went outside to see his car damaged in an apparent bomb attack. The blast also caused damage to Acar's house and lawn, and his neighbors came out of their homes in panic. No one was injured in the attack.

Police arrived at the scene and started an investigation to determine the type of explosive and the people who carried out the attack.

Acar said he did not have problems with anyone.

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35. [Security, Sri Lanka] Recovered Military Items

Monday, May 21 2012

http://www.nationalsecurity.lk/MCNS/defence-security/fullnews_2.php?id=3636

NORTH: Troops on their search and clear operations in the general area of PEYADIKULAM recovered one 81 mm base plate on Sunday (20).

De-mining groups recovered twenty-eight anti personnel mines from VILATHIKULAM and PULMUDAI areas on the same day (20).

EAST: Troops in the East, recovered one 40 mm grenade launcher bomb and one hand grenade from ADAMPANKULAM and MADUVILNADU areas on the same day (20).

Meanwhile, Police and Army troops conducted a joint search operation in general areas of PUTHUKKUDDIYIRUPPU and SUTHANTHIRAPURAM recovered 16 Kg of Trinitrotoluene (TNT), 1 Kg of TNT powder, one 470g of TNT slab, 109 Kg of C4 explosives, 10 Kg of plastic explosives, five plastic explosives, 14 meter long detonator code, one unknown fuse, nine anti personnel mines, a part of an anti personnel mine, four claymore mines, two pressure mines, two 60 mm mortar bombs, a part of a 130 mm artillery shell, eight simple charger door openers, one claymore booster charger, six 81 mm mortar fuses, eight anti personnel mine fuses, one T-56 weapon, four magazines, one pouch and one hundred and nine rounds of T-56 ammunition on Sunday (20).

NORTH: On an information received from a civilian, troops recovered two 60 mm mortar bombs and one 81mm mortar bomb from CHAVAKACHCHERI area on Monday (21).

Meanwhile, de-mining groups recovered one hundred and fifty-six anti personnel mines from VILATHIKULAM and PALAMODDEI areas on the same day (21).

EAST: Special Task Force recovered five locally made weapons from KARADIYANARU area on the same day (21).

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36. [Security, India] RDX, Arms Cache Recovered In Nawanshahr

Monday, May 21 2012

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-05-21/india/31800349_1_arms-cache-rdx-arms-and-ammunition

With the arrest of two persons, Nawanshahr police have recovered 2.7 kg of RDX along with arms and ammunition, which were concealed underground since February 2010. One of their accomplices had escaped to US.

Patiala Range IG Paramjit Singh Gill said Sandeep Singh, a resident of Saifbad under Phillaur police station and Sukhwinder Singh of Rohno near Khanna, were nabbed under suspicious circumstances after a raid on Sunday evening at Karnana village.

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37. [Special Interest, Russia] Russia Tests 'Fifth Generation' Missile That Can Penetrate NATO Defence System

Wednesday, May 23 2012

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/9285130/Russia-tests-fifth-generation-missile-that-can-penetrate-Nato-defence-system.html>

The highly-symbolic launch came just days after alliance formally activated the first stage of a missile defence shield whose deployment Russia has bitterly opposed out of fears that it may target its own vast nuclear arsenal.

"The dummy warhead reached its target area at the Kura test range on the Kamchatka Peninsula. The set goals of the launch were reached," Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces spokesman Vadim Koval told Interfax.

A military source told the agency that the launch was only the second ever conducted in the top-secret programme.

The source said the first failed on September 27 when the missile suffered an undisclosed malfunction and crashed six miles from the launch site.

The rocket still has no formal name but is being billed by the military as a "fifth generation" weapon that substantially upgrades the technology used by its already-feared Topol-M and Yars systems.

Various sources told Interfax that the new missile was better equipped to penetrate the new US-backed missile defence system in Europe whose first stage Nato official activated at its Chicago summit on Sunday.

"This is one of the ... measures being developed by Russia's military and political leadership in response to the US deployment of a global anti-missile system," former strategic forces director Viktor Yesin told Interfax.

Little is known about the new weapon except its purported ability to better avoid being shot down.

The Russian missile "uses a new type of fuel that helps reduce the time required to operate the propellants in the active stage of the rocket's trajectory," one military source said.

Officials believe this makes it more difficult to detect and easier to manoeuvre. Interfax said the weapon is also equipped with individual warheads that can change course to avoid being shot down.

Russia has hundreds of missiles capable of raining down nearly 2,000 nuclear warheads on the United States and its other former Cold War-era foes.

But much of the force is built on technology developed in the Soviet era that Russia fears may become obsolete by the time NATO'S shield becomes fully operational by the scheduled date of 2018.

Russian President Vladimir Putin unveiled a massive new armaments programme during his successful election to a third term and made a visit to a military factory one of his first high-profile stops after his May 7 swearing in.

Putin's predecessor and protégé Dmitry Medvedev warned the West last year that Russia will have to deploy new rockets on the borders of NATO'S European partners such as Poland should its concerns not be addressed.

The army's top general Nikolai Makarov this month also warned the United States that Russia reserved the right to pre-emptively strike Nato targets once it feels its shield posed a significant threat.

US President Barack Obama has sent multiple negotiating missions to Moscow and was earlier this year caught by an open microphone telling Mr Medvedev that he intended to negotiate more on the issue should he win re-election in November.

News reports did not specify the missile's actual range nor the number of warheads it can carry.



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38. [Attack, India] Crude Bomb Kills Five Kids

Wednesday, May 23 2012

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120524/jsp/nation/story_15524185.jsp#.T76gd117uSo

At least five schoolchildren were killed this afternoon when a crude but powerful bomb went off near a garbage dump on the outskirts of Allahabad, but police and forensic experts ruled out a terror strike.

A senior police officer said the bomb might have been “dumped” by “anti-social” elements near the roadside flanked by a cluster of slums.

“Bomb-making is a cottage industry in Allahabad and the bomb was crude but very powerful. It might have been dumped by the congested roadside by anti-socials,” IG, law and order, Lucknow, B.P. Singh told reporters in the Uttar Pradesh capital.

Senior superintendent of police, Allahabad, Naveen Arora said the bodies of the boys had been sent for post-mortem.

Unconfirmed reports, however, said a woman also died in the 3.30pm explosion in the Kareli area of Allahabad, about 10km from the main city.

Arora said he had also received information that six children and four women were injured in the blast. The condition of at least three children is serious, police sources said.

Inspector-general Singh said the kids who died were between eight and ten. One bled to death from severe head injuries while two others died of blood loss caused by injuries in their legs and lower abdomen, the sources said.

The sources said the bomb, which was kept in a sack, may have exploded after one of the children hit it accidentally. About 15 children who had just returned from school were playing in the area at that time.

“Allahabad is notorious for production of crude bombs. It is not exactly clear how the bomb exploded at a place where children were playing. Investigating officers are probing it. From all available accounts, it appeared to have gone off after a kid hit it while playing,” Singh said.

An anti-terror team and forensic and bomb experts rushed to the spot along with a dog squad, but preliminary investigations ruled out the involvement of terror groups.

Officials said the Union home ministry had asked for a report from the state government on the blast.

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39. [Attack, Turkey] Car Bomb Hits Turkish Police

Friday, May 25 2012

<http://tvnz.co.nz/world-news/car-bomb-hits-turkish-police-4900846>

A suspected suicide bomber detonated explosives inside a car outside a police station in the central Turkish province of Kayseri today, killing himself and a police officer and wounding some 20 others, Turkish media reported.

Kurdish separatists, Islamist militants, including al Qaeda, as well as groups on the far left and right have all carried out bomb attacks in Turkey, but there was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Broadcaster NTV said the bomber had tried to drive his car into the police station moments before the blast took place. At least 19 people were wounded in the attack, six of them seriously, other media reported.

NTV said a second assailant was also involved. Reuters could not immediately confirm any of the details surrounding the attack which took place in the town of Pinarbasi east of Kayseri city. Kayseri province is located some 325 km southeast of the Turkish capital Ankara.

"We can't get in contact with Pinarbasi police right now, either by telephone or other mobile devices. We know as much as television has reported," one Kayseri police officer told Reuters by telephone shortly after the blast.

"We heard that one policeman was killed and 19 people were wounded but we don't know yet how many of these people are policemen and how many are civilians," he said.

Hasan Gumus, a civil servant at the Pinarbasi district governor's office said he heard the blast from his office two kilometres away.

"We heard a huge blast even though our office is 2 km away from the police station. We saw a big cloud of smoke rising but we don't know about the number of dead or injured," Gumus told Reuters by telephone.

"We heard that it was a car which attempted to drive into the police station and then an explosion occurred."

Television footage showed frantic scenes around the police station in Pinarbasi with fire engines and ambulances rushing to the site of the blast.

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40. [Law Enforcement, United States] Barricade Subject Arrested, IEDs Discovered

Friday, May 18 2012

<http://www.kgun9.com/news/local/152023135.html>

Rodney Bruce Woodville, 46, was arrested by the Pima County Sheriff after almost a six-hour barricade situation.

Sgt. Dawn Barkman tells KGUN9 that around 10:45 p.m., deputies responded to the 5600 block of West Louisiana Street in reference to an unknown problem.

Neighbors called 9-1-1 to report that they could hear yelling coming from a residence.

As deputies approached the home, Woodville discharged a gun at the deputies.

Deputies immediately locked down the scene and attempted to negotiate with Woodville to come out of the home. It was unknown if anyone else was inside.

At approximately 4:30 a.m., Woodville voluntarily exited and was taken into custody.

Woodville has been arrested on four counts of aggravated assault, one count of weapons misconduct and one count of arson of an occupied structure.

Deputies discovered Woodville had constructed improvised explosive devices. They observed IED components and a blast seat where an IED had exploded. Several hazardous chemical experiments were also located.

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41. [Security, United States] 'Mother Of Satan' Explosive Seized

Saturday, May 19 2012

<http://www.onlinesentinel.com/news/Mother-of-Satan-explosive-seized.html>

Explosive material that authorities say they seized from a Gage Street home Thursday is likely a compound known as "mother of Satan" to Islamic extremists for its instability and can be made easily from household items.

Jeremy Gene Upp, 36, of 42 Gage St., was charged with criminal use of explosives by the State Fire Marshal's Office on Thursday after authorities evacuated part of a neighborhood near Memorial Bridge and shut down the street for several hours.

Acting State Fire Marshal Joseph Thomas said an investigation is ongoing and a motive hasn't been determined. Authorities have not suggested Upp had violent intentions.

Upp, dressed in a two-piece orange jail uniform, said nothing to a judge Friday during a brief initial court appearance by video in Augusta District Court. He stared straight at the camera as his attorney acknowledged Upp understood he faced a felony charge carrying a maximum penalty of five years in jail.

Assistant District Attorney Brad Grant confirmed that federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms also are investigating.

Bail conditions prohibit Upp from use and possession of incendiary devices or explosive, as well as firearms. He is also banned from having contact with girlfriend Amanda Bechard, 27, and neighbor Kevin Curtis.

A court affidavit written by Kenneth MacMaster, an investigator with the State Fire Marshal's Office, says investigators got a search warrant for Upp's apartment as they checked into complaints of explosions at the rear of the property.

"During the investigation, Jeremy Upp was identified as the person responsible for the explosions and Upp was manufacturing and detonating explosives to the rear of his apartment," MacMaster wrote.

The affidavit said triacetone triperoxide — known by the acronym TATP — was the explosive authorities found in Upp's apartment that was later detonated by Maine State Police bomb technicians in his backyard Thursday night.

"You can walk into a Rite Aid and walk out with the components," said Thomas, the acting state fire marshal. "To have (TATP), you have to have changed the composition of the material."

Bechard told authorities that Upp had been "manufacturing explosives and detonating explosives" as recent as earlier this week, when the last batch was made, according to the affidavit. On Friday, Bechard disputed that she said that to authorities.

'It's not a stable element'

A 2005 report from the British Royal Society of Chemistry said ingredients such as paint thinner, bleach or antiseptic and drain unblockers can create white crystals of TATP — a combination of acetone, hydrogen peroxide, and sulfuric acid — if mixed correctly. The white substance resembles sugar.

“TATP is highly sensitive to heat, friction and mechanical shock, so much so that inexperienced handling can lead to maiming and death,” the report says.

It also says the compound is known as mother of Satan among Islamic extremists who use it for “devastating instability.”

A 2005 thesis from the Naval Postgraduate School said that TATP is “commonly found as the main charge being employed by Middle East terrorists in suicide bombings” and in improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, found on the battlefields of Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries.

TATP was notably used by Richard Reid, known as the Shoe Bomber, who pled guilty to eight counts of terrorism after attempting to detonate explosives hidden in his shoes on an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami in December 2001.

Thomas said because it so unstable, it was detonated in Upp’s backyard shortly after 7 p.m., rendering it safe.

Steve Marson, owner of Hallowell-based Central Maine Pyrotechnics and operator of the Pyro City Fireworks retail store in Manchester, said Friday that Upp had been to his store several times to buy consumer fireworks.

But he said in consumer fireworks, all explosive and coloring elements are mixed and even if they were taken apart, certain elements couldn’t be isolated. TATP isn’t sold from his store or any other in raw form, he said.

“He would have had to come up with that on his own,” Marson said of TATP. “I do not believe he got any of that from consumer fireworks.”

Explosives found in kitchen

Thomas initially said Thursday that Upp’s probation officer had reported possibly illegal goings-on behind his home. However, the prosecutor, Grant, said Friday that Upp was not on probation at the time the search warrant was executed.

Thomas said it’s possible the information came from a probation or parole officer who saw activity while visiting another home in the neighborhood. Upp’s girlfriend, Bechard, said Friday that the information came from an officer visiting a neighboring home.

She also said Upp got the acetone peroxide from a neighbor who had been setting explosives off at times behind her home. She discussed the explosives authorities found in detail, saying the TATP was in her kitchen in plain sight, held in rolled-up paper plates with paper bags covering them.

Thomas confirmed that's how the compounds were found.

"He never touched them," Bechard said of Upp. "I'm not going to have Jeremy making something like that."

Bechard maintains that two neighbors were making the explosives and setting them off, creating the blasts neighbors reported hearing over a time period ranging from this week to last month. She said Upp had set one similar explosive off before with those neighbors, but never did it again.

Court records show Upp formerly lived in Richmond and has felony convictions for assault and three counts of violating conditions of release in Sagadahoc County Superior Court in Bath.

For those offenses, he was sentenced in 2005 to five years in prison with all but two years suspended and three years of probation. Other records show he has been charged with other offenses in Florida and Washington.

In court Friday, Upp could be seen conferring with attorney Lisa Whittier, and she answered questions from Judge Beth Dobson about whether Upp understood the charge and his rights.

"We're going to be reserving argument on bail today," Whittier told the judge.

Dobson said bail would continue at the \$25,000 cash amount set by the bail commissioner and a status conference for Upp would be scheduled for July 24 at Kennebec County Superior Court.

Bechard said she doesn't have enough money to bail him out.

"I will do whatever I need to do. I need to change his bail conditions; I need to get a lawyer," she said. "He needs to be able to talk to me."

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42. [Attack, United States] IED Bomb Explodes In Ewing Parking Lot

Tuesday, May 22 2012

http://www.nj.com/mercer/index.ssf/2012/05/ied_bomb_explodes_in_ewing_par.html

A crude bomb set off in an empty parking lot Sunday night brought out a state police bomb squad but caused no damage or injuries, officials said.

The blast lit up the lot outside Elite Care Adult Day Care on West Upper Ferry Road with a bright light and smoke around 8:45 p.m. The “improvised explosive device” was about the size of a soda can and similar to a homemade pipe bomb, Sgt. John Stemler said yesterday.

A witness immediately called police and reporting hearing “a loud bang” and seeing the light and smoke. Officers found cylinder-shaped pieces of duct tape near the blast site and called in the bomb squad.

Police said the day care center was closed at the time of the explosion. The device was left in an empty portion of the large lot, away from buildings and the few cars parked there.

“That’s why I’m saying I don’t think there was any harmful intent,” Stemler said.

The device was not very sophisticated and could have been jerry-rigged using fireworks, he said.

“I definitely don’t think we have any professional bomb makers sitting there making bombs,” Stemler said.

Police are checking fireworks sales from stores in Pennsylvania, the closest state where people can legally possess them, and asking residents to report any open and discarded cans of explosive black powder. They warned people not to approach any suspicious packages or devices but rather to go to a safe location and notify police.

They also encouraged residents to report youths using fireworks or going into areas late at night where they might set off explosives.

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43. [Attack, Mexico] Mexico Gang Launches Car Bomb Near U.S. Border

Thursday, May 24 2012

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-05-24/drug-war-mexico/55195116/1>

Suspected drug cartel gunmen opened fire on a hotel being used as a police barracks then attacked it with a car bomb Thursday, wounding eight officers less than 4 miles from the U.S. border, Mexican officials said.

A Tamaulipas state official said authorities believed the Zetas cartel, one of Mexico's two most powerful criminal organizations, carried out the attack on the Hotel Santa Cecilia in Nuevo Laredo, a city across the border from Laredo, Texas.

The Zetas, founded by Mexican special forces defectors, have carried out a number of sophisticated attacks, but Thursday's assault appeared to be one of the most elaborate. It also appeared to be the first attack directed against Tamaulipas' new state police force, which took over a year ago from a municipal police force in Nuevo Laredo that was accused of ineffectiveness and corruption.

The newly commissioned officers, who hail from around the state, were staying in the hotel until permanent barracks were built. Mexican police frequently requisition hotels in the absence of official barracks, or when threats make it unsafe for them to live at home.

The head of state police and Tamaulipas' attorney general said three of the wounded officers had third-degree burns, while the rest had minor injuries.

The attack on the hotel took place around 7:15 a.m. on one of the main streets in Nuevo Laredo, less than four hours after unknown gunmen hurled gasoline bombs at the Maranhão, one of the city's most popular nightclubs. The club, which was closed at the time, was badly damaged by fire but there were no injuries, authorities said.

Minutes after the hotel attack, gunmen opened fire on the Nuevo Laredo Institute of Technology, a science-focused university.

Nuevo Laredo is a stronghold of the Zetas. It has been the scene of vicious turf battles between the gang and its former ally, the Gulf cartel, which is now allied with the Zetas' biggest rival, the Sinaloa cartel led by Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman.

The border city has seen a series of gruesome mass killings in recent week. Fourteen bodies were found in a van in downtown Nuevo Laredo on April 17, and 23 people found hanged or decapitated in the border city on May 4.

Thursday's attack came less than a week after a high-ranking member of the Zetas was arrested and accused of orchestrating the dumping of 49 mutilated bodies in a northern Mexico town square in order to create terror and confusion as part of a battle with the Gulf and Sinaloa cartels.

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44. [Attack, United States] Flashlight-Rigged Bomb Explodes At Salvation Army Building In Phoenix, Injuring Two

Friday, May 25 2012

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/flashlight-rigged-bomb-explodes-salvation-army-building-phoenix-injuring-article-1.1084306>

A flashlight rigged with explosives went off Thursday inside a Salvation Army distribution center in south-central Phoenix, slightly injuring two employees, authorities said.

Phoenix police said preliminary evidence suggests the incident is linked to two other recent cases in Glendale in which someone left flashlights packed with explosives in open areas of the city.

The Salvation Army distribution center and nearby area were evacuated as a precaution and police brought in a bomb squad to investigate the explosion, which occurred at about 3:30 p.m. The building did not appear to be damaged.

Agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives responded to the scene, as they did to the Glendale incidents.

Authorities say a Salvation Army employee was sorting through donated items, found the flashlight and tried to turn it on when it exploded. The employee suffered minor injuries, as did a nearby co-worker.

Glendale police had reported that explosive devices were found on May 13 and 14 and that the explosives were inside a standard 6-volt yellow flashlight.

They said the devices detonated when the people who discovered them tried to turn on the flashlights. Police say no one was seriously hurt in either case. No arrests have been made, but federal agents are investigating.

Phoenix police say they won't know for sure whether the incidents are connected until bomb technicians review the cases.

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45. [Security, Colombia] Army Destroys Minefield In Southwest Colombia

Thursday, May 17 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24105-minefield-and-explosives-found-in-southwest-colombia.html>

The Colombian army has destructed a minefield and deactivated two gas bombs in the southwestern part of the country, reported local media Thursday.

Army forces found and deactivated the explosive devices while carrying out an operation against the FARC in the Putomayo department.

According to official reports, the explosives were installed by guerrillas from the FARC's 48th Front, who were allegedly planning to target security forces and civilians eradicating coca crops in the region.

Soldiers reportedly discovered the minefield hidden in a coca field in La Rosa, a town in the municipality of Puerto Asis. It was reportedly composed of 12 high-powered explosive devices and a 50 pound gas cylinder.

"Composed of ANFO explosives and shrapnel, [the explosives] were packaged in metal tubes and reinforced with a detonating cord. They also had an activation system for syringe pressure," read reports from Colombia army's 6th division.

A second gas cylinder bomb was found roadside in Puerto Asis and is believed to have been installed by members of the FARC's 32nd Front. The explosive contained three pounds of pentolite, five meters of detonating cord and shrapnel made of nails, car filters and feces.



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46. [Special Interest, Venezuela] FARC Hiding In Venezuela: Colombia Defense Minister

Tuesday, May 22 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24166-farc-hiding-in-venezuela-colombia-defense-minister.html>

The FARC rebel front accused of killing 12 Colombian soldiers Monday is stationed in Venezuela and moves easily between the two countries, Colombia's minister of defense said Tuesday.

The guerrilla unit probably has been using Venezuela as "its home base for quite a while," Defense Minister Juan Carlos Pinzon said in an interview with Caracol Radio.

The FARC, Colombia's largest guerrilla group, allegedly ambushed the army's First Brigade while it patrolled an area in the northern department of Guajira near the Venezuelan border. Twelve uniformed soldiers died in the attack and at least four more were wounded.

"We know that this arm of the FARC moved from Venezuela in order to attack our soldiers, and returned again to Venezuela," Army General Sergio Mantilla said Tuesday in an interview with local media.

The army, he added, discovered the body of one fallen soldier less than 500 hundred feet from markers that separate Colombia from Venezuela.

According to news website Terra, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos has contacted his Venezuelan counterpart Hugo Chavez twice since Monday to alert him to FARC's presence in Venezuelan territory.

Chavez responded swiftly. "We maintain our position: we will not permit the incursions of any armed forces into Venezuelan territory, regardless of their origen," he said, adding that he had sent brigades to the state of Zulia, where the 59th Front is supposedly positioned.

Pinzon stressed the importance of Chavez' cooperation and his "decision to take concrete actions."

"I hope they will be effective," he said.

Colombian authorities claimed that 100 to 120 FARC fighters attacked a squad of 30 army soldiers with machine guns, rifles, and explosives. The soldiers had been supervising the reconstruction of energy towers once toppled by the FARC.

The bodies of the fallen soldiers -- among them, an officer, a sargeant, and ten foot soldiers -- will be returned to their home regions, General Mantilla told Caracol Radio.

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47. [Security, Argentina] Alvaro Uribe Bomb Plot: Argentina Police Defuse Bomb Ahead Of Former Colombia President Talk

Tuesday, May 22 2012

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/22/alvaro-uribe-bomb-plot-argentina_n_1537197.html

Police on Tuesday defused a pair of powerful firecrackers hidden in a Buenos Aires theater and apparently timed to explode just when a crowd of high-paying guests would have gathered to greet former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe.

A theater employee found the explosives lodged in a light fixture in the Gran Rex theater, authorities said. It was attached to a cellphone with an alarm set for 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, just when Uribe would have joined a post-speech cocktail with business executives and other important guests, investigative Judge Norberto Oyarbide said.

"It is a simple device, but it could have caused deaths," Oyarbide said, adding that windows could have shattered, creating panic in the crowd. "The damage to Argentina would have been huge."

The judge spoke after surveying the scene where federal police bomb experts were searching for clues inside the historic theater on Corrientes Avenue in the heart of the Argentine capital.

Later Tuesday, federal police clarified that the device lacked damaging power, but would have made an extremely loud noise. Inside a small cardboard box wedged in the light fixture were two extremely loud firecrackers, each with 50 grams of black powder, wired to a nine-volt battery, a cellphone and an ignition device, police said.

"These kinds of fireworks (noisemaking bombs) are designed to produce extremely loud noises while causing little physical damage," the police statement said.

Colombia's defense minister, Juan Carlos Pinzon, called the attempt "terrorism" and said "we reject any such action, no matter how small."

Just last week, a young man in Colombia's capital, Bogota, set off a bomb targeting Uribe's former interior and justice minister. The attack, still unsolved, killed two bodyguards and injured 39 people in a busy commercial district.

Uribe, who served as Colombia's president in 2002-10, was invited to speak Wednesday about his country's transformation as part of a symposium organized by WOM-Latam, a private company that organizes leadership seminars and sold tickets to the cocktail party for more than \$500 each.

Oyarbide, the investigating judge, said that "God willing," the seminar, including Uribe's speech, would proceed as scheduled. Later Tuesday, organizers said the show would go on.

Uribe himself, in an email to The Associated Press, said that "we're going to leave it to the Argentine authorities manage the issue."

A popular conservative in a region dominated by leftist leaders, Uribe took a hard line against leftist rebels, leading to significant security gains during his presidency. But human rights activists criticize him for unlawful killings by the military and for making peace with far-right militias that committed thousands of murders.

Earlier this week, a coalition of leftists and Colombians living in Argentina said the symposium's organizers were falsely presenting Uribe as a great peacemaker, when in fact he committed "the most atrocious crimes."



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48. [Security, Colombia] Military Forces Dismantle Bomb In Southwestern Colombia

Tuesday, May 22 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24146-military-forces-dismantle-a-bomb-in-southwestern-colombia.html>

Colombia's 14th Mobile Brigade have defused a bomb found in the town of Caloto in the southwestern department of Cauca, reported local media.

Security forces discovered 22 cylinders which contained over 100lbs. of black powder used for explosives. Two minefields allegedly set up by the FARC's 6th Front were also found in nearby rural villages.

"Once again the timely action of the troops thwarted a terrorist attack that would have caused a great tragedy and would have left over 4,500 people homeless living in these settlements near the town of Caloto," said General Jorge Humberto Jerez, commander of the brigade.



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49. [Security, Colombia] Colombian Military Finds FARC Weapon Stashes

Thursday, May 24 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24227-colombian-military-uncovers-farc-weapons-and-stolen-uniforms.html>

Colombian soldiers seized arms and stolen military uniforms from five supposed FARC warehouses in the western part of the country, newspaper El Espectador reported Thursday.

The joint operation between Colombian military and police forces uncovered 180 pounds of explosives, one anti-personnel mine, hundreds of gunpowder jars and thousands of weapons cartridges in the rural municipality of Buga, located in the Valle de Cauca department, the military reported.

They also found dozens of stolen military uniforms and four national police regalia marked with highway patrol badges.

Authorities alleged that the materials belonged to FARC front Alirio Torres. There were no arrests made in the operation.

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50. [Attack, Colombia] FARC' Attack Police Station In Southwestern Colombia

Thursday, May 24 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24226-farc-attack-police-station.html>

Colombia's largest rebel group, the FARC, allegedly attacked a police station in the southwestern department of Nariño, report local media Thursday.

According to reports, a package bomb exploded in the municipality of Sandona, damaging 15 houses and injuring one policeman and three civilians, including one 69-year-old woman and her 30-year-old daughter.

The wounded are being treated in a nearby hospital, but given the severity of their injuries, might be transferred to a larger hospital in the department's capital, Pasto.

For now, local authorities attribute the attack to the FARC, which has a strong presence in the municipality.



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