



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.



Two large explosions ripped through the Syrian capital Thursday, heavily damaging a military intelligence building and leaving blood and human remains in the streets. (AP Photo/SANA)

[See [70 Killed In Huge Damascus Explosions](#)]

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1. [Attack, Pakistan] U.S. Drone Strike Kills Nine In Pakistan, Officials Say

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/05/us-pakistan-drone-idUSBRE84402T20120505>

A U.S. drone aircraft killed nine suspected militants on Saturday in Pakistan's North Waziristan region near the Afghan border, Pakistani security officials said.

The controversial drone program, a key element in U.S. counter-terrorism efforts, is highly unpopular in Pakistan where it is considered a violation of sovereignty which causes unacceptable civilian casualties.

In Saturday's strike, a drone fired missiles at a compound in the Shawal area of North Waziristan, killing the nine, said the officials who declined to be identified.

Shawal is a remote area of forested ridges and valleys that spreads out on both sides of the border and has long been known as a haven for militants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and beyond.

A Pakistani parliamentary committee recently demanded an end to drone strikes on Pakistani territory as part of its recommendations for how its relationship with the United States should change.

The United States has given no indication it intends to halt the campaign, and the administration of President Barack Obama has said the use of the remotely piloted aircraft is legal under international law.



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2. [Attack, Afghanistan] Bomb Kills Three NATO Troops In Eastern Afghanistan

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://news.yahoo.com/bomb-kills-3-nato-troops-eastern-afghanistan-120201390.html>

NATO says a bomb has killed three of its service members in eastern Afghanistan.

The coalition says the three were killed on Monday. The statement did not provide details about the attack nor the nationality of the service members killed. NATO usually waits for member nations to provide details about troop deaths.

Militants commonly plant bombs along roads used by security forces, inflicting high casualties on them as well as civilians.

So far this year, 142 coalition members have died in Afghanistan.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Afghan government on Monday condemned the recent Taliban announcement of the start of their annual "spring offensive," calling it cowardly and un-Islamic and saying the country's forces would thwart any attacks.

The Taliban's offensive begins every year as snows melt and the weather warms across Afghanistan, making both travel and fighting easier. It normally leads to a surge of militant attacks throughout the country as the Taliban attempt to retake lost territory and intimidate the government.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Embassy in Kabul acknowledged a two-year, rarely used program to release detainees from a military prison run by the American military near the capital, saying it meant to bolster reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

But the Taliban announcement last week was another sign of the difficulty of reconciling with a group that has been fighting the U.S.-led coalition and Afghan forces for more than a decade. The Taliban said they would target anyone — from government workers to tribal leaders — who works against them and helps foreigners in their "occupation" of Afghanistan.

On Monday, the Ministry of Interior said that "while again declaring war against the Afghan people, their government and constitution, the Taliban insurgents also abuse their religious values in the name of a cause opposed to the basic Islamic principles of peace, education and kindness."

It said the Taliban use propaganda and "twist holy religious values to justify their criminal activities," which have killed thousands of innocent people.

Last year was the deadliest on record for civilians in the Afghan war, with 3,021 killed, according to the United Nations. Taliban-affiliated militants were responsible for more than three-quarters of those deaths.

The Taliban have launched several large-scale attacks in recent weeks, including coordinated attacks on Kabul and three other cities that left 11 people and 36 insurgents dead, and a strike on a compound used by foreigners in the Afghan capital that killed seven.

The uptick in violence comes as NATO gears up to hand over security to local forces ahead of a 2014 deadline for the withdrawal of foreign combat troops. Some have questioned if local forces will be up to the task.

The U.S.-led coalition has also started its own campaign aimed at insurgents and is thought to have launched a number of operations in the eastern part of Afghanistan near the Pakistani border. The operations, in provinces such as Ghazni, are also aimed at choking the insurgents ability to reach Kabul.

The Washington Post reported Monday that the U.S. military has been secretly releasing high-level detainees from the Parwan detention center near Kabul to help with the reconciliation process. Many high-level Taliban detainees are held at the facility, which is run by the U.S. military but will be handed over to the Afghans within six months under a recently signed agreement.

U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker told the newspaper that many times the United States had acted on information that "might strengthen the reconciliation process."

"Ambassador Crocker was referencing a two-year old, rarely used program in which senior military officials, together with their Afghan counterparts, weigh the benefits of releasing certain individuals who are being detained at the Parwan Detention Facility and who are willing to denounce violence and engage in the process of reconciliation," U.S. Embassy spokesman Gavin Sundwall told The Associated Press.

Sundwall said fewer than 20 detainees have ever been released under the program and that the decision takes into account whether they pose any further security threat.

In latest violence, four gunmen took over a tall building in the eastern province of Paktika late Sunday and started shooting down into surrounding government compounds, wounding one civilian. A spokesman for the governor, Mokhlis Afghan, said police surrounded the building in the provincial capital and killed the attackers after several hours. NATO and Afghan soldiers provided support.

Also Monday, the governor of southern Helmand province condemned a NATO airstrike last week that he said killed six civilians — a woman, three girls and two boys. Gulab Mangal said Friday's strike was aimed at insurgents attacking NATO and Afghan forces in the province's Sangin district. He said "a civilian house was also targeted by the airstrike unintentionally."

He said he asked the commander of NATO forces in the region to "prevent such events in the future."

In the north, a large roadside bomb killed three people Monday in Kunduz province's Imam Sahib district — including a high-ranking national border police commander, said Amanullah Qurishi, the district chief.

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3. [Attack, Afghanistan] Bomb Kills NATO Troop In Afghanistan

Sunday, 6 May 2012

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57428682/bomb-kills-nato-troop-in-afghanistan/

NATO said a bomb has killed a service member in Afghanistan on Sunday

The coalition said the an improvised explosive device's blast occurred in the country's east.

The ISAF previously announced three service members had died.

An individual who opened fire was killed when coalition forces returned fire. The incident is under investigation.

The statement did not provide details about the attack nor the nationality of the service members killed.

NATO usually waits for member nations to provide details about troop deaths.

The year's toll of coalition deaths this year is now 138.

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4. [Attack, Afghanistan] Roadside Bomb Kills Five Afghan Police

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://www.navytimes.com/news/2012/05/ap-roadside-bomb-kills-5-afghan-police-050512/>

An Afghan official says a roadside bomb has killed five border police in an eastern province near the border with Pakistan.

Ahmad Zia Abdulzai, a spokesman for the governor of Nangarhar province, said the five were killed Friday evening when the vehicle in which they were patrolling was hit by the remote-controlled bomb.

He said Saturday that the incident took place in the province's Dur Baba district.

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5. [Attack, Pakistan] Bomb In Marketplace Kills 20 In Pakistan

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/05/04/bomb-in-marketplace-kills-16-in-pakistan/>

A Taliban suicide bombing in a Pakistani market close to the Afghan border killed 20 people Friday, officials said, a day after the U.S. released letters seized from Usama bin Laden's compound that criticized Pakistani militants for killing too many civilians.

Five of the dead in the blast in the Bajur tribal area were local members of the security forces, including one who had received an award for bravery in fighting Islamist militants, government administrator Abdul Haseeb said. The others were passers-by. Over 40 people were wounded, mostly civilians.

The suicide bomber, who was believed to be 15 to 16 years old, detonated his explosives as he approached a security checkpoint near the market in the town of Khar, said Haseeb. The attack took place as locals were headed to work or taking their children to school. The dead included a woman and several schoolchildren.

The explosion damaged over a dozen shops, and rescue officials searched through the debris for anyone trapped inside. The ground outside the market was covered in blood and littered with the shoes of those hit by the attack.

Pakistani Taliban spokesman Ahsanullah Ahsan claimed responsibility for the bombing in a telephone call to The Associated Press.

"This is revenge for killing our people," said Ahsan.

Pakistan's branch of the Taliban, which is battling for control of the region, has killed and wounded thousands of people since 2009, many of them civilians in markets or mosques.

On Thursday, the U.S. released 17 letters seized from the compound of Al Qaeda chief Usama bin Laden by American commandos after they had killed him one year ago. Many of them addressed bombings in which civilians were killed.

Two senior Al Qaeda leaders wrote a letter to Pakistani Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud in December 2010 criticizing the group for carrying out attacks in markets, mosques and other places that kill innocent Muslims. It accused the group of making "clear legal and religious mistakes which might result in a negative deviation from the set path of the jihadists' movement in Pakistan."

The group's actions also "are contrary to the objectives of jihad and to the efforts exerted by us," said the letter, which was written by Abu Yahya al-Libi and a militant leader identified as Atiyatullah.

One of bin Laden's spokesmen, the American Adam Gadahn, wrote a letter to an unknown recipient in January 2011 in which he listed a series of attacks on mosques and other sites in Pakistan that killed hundreds of civilians. The Pakistani Taliban either claimed responsibility for the attacks or were suspected of carrying them out.

Gadahn said these kinds of attacks "distort the picture of the pious and loyal mujahideen."

"Now many regular people are looking at the mujahideen as a group that does not hesitate to take people's money by falsehood, blowing up mosques, spilling the blood of dozens of people in the way to kill one or two who were labeled as enemies," said Gadahn.

One of the incidents highlighted by Gadahn was a 2010 suicide bombing of a mosque in the northwest town of Darra Adam Khel targeting anti-Taliban tribal elders that killed nearly 70 people. He expressed skepticism at attempts by the Pakistani Taliban to blame the attack on the private U.S. security firm formerly known as Blackwater.

The Pakistani Taliban rarely claim responsibility for attacks that kill many civilians, often blaming them on the U.S. or Pakistani governments.

Gadahn advised the Pakistani Taliban to carry out more targeted attacks that would limit civilian casualties.

"If that targeted person really deserves to be killed, why not employ another method rather than random attacks, which are not tolerated by any conscience or religion?" said Gadahn. "Have you not remembered that you are fighting in the Muslim towns and not in the infidel's fortresses?"



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6. [Security, Afghanistan] Al Qaeda Bomb Cell Infiltrated By Insider Who Foiled New Airline Plot

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/al-qaeda-bomb-cell-infiltrated-insider-foiled-airline/story?id=16300538#.T6kY7VKRM14>

In a stunning intelligence coup, a dangerous al Qaeda bomb cell in Yemen was successfully infiltrated by an inside source who secretly worked for the CIA and several other intelligence agencies, authorities revealed to ABC News.

The inside source is now "safely out of Yemen," according to one international intelligence official, and was able to bring with him to Saudi Arabia the bomb al Qaeda thought was going to be detonated on a U.S.-bound aircraft.

The bomb, a refined version of the so-called underwear bomb used in a failed attempt on a Detroit-bound flight on Christmas Day 2009, is now at the FBI crime laboratories in Quantico, Virginia.

U.S. officials said they felt confident throughout the operation that the bomb was not an actual threat because the inside source had "control."

White House counter-terrorism advisor John Brennan reiterated on ABC News' "Good Morning America" today that the bomb was not an "active threat," which is why the public was told repeatedly by top administration officials, including Brennan, that there were no known active plots surrounding the anniversary of bin Laden's death.

Brennan would not discuss the status of the would-be bomber, citing operational security, and declined to say whether the insider had himself been tapped to carry out the plot.

"The means that we were able to get this device, we're trying to make sure we protect, again, the equities that are involved with it," he said.

Brennan also said he could not say whether there were other bombers still at large.

"You never know what you don't know," Brennan said. "I think people getting on a plane today should feel confident their intelligence services are working day in and day out to stop these IEDs [improvised explosive devices] from getting anywhere near a plane, but also I think when they go through the security measures at airports, they understand why they're in place."

Authorities told ABC News that the device was non-metallic, meaning it could be easy to get through at least one layer of metal-detecting airport security, and had an improved triggering mechanism over the one that failed on Christmas Day in 2009. And what Brennan knows and did not say, according to officials, is that several other elements of the plot were under investigation, including possible additional bombers and other kinds of bombs.

New Underwear Bomb From Al Qaeda Master Bombmaker

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Late Monday federal officials confirmed that the U.S., working with other intelligence agencies, recovered the explosive device presumably meant to attack a U.S.-bound flight that resembles other bombs manufactured by the Yemen-based al Qaeda affiliate al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

The plot appeared timed to coincide with the first anniversary of Osama bin Laden's death, but the bomber did not get as far as purchasing plane tickets or choosing a flight. As ABC News first reported last week, the plot led the U.S. to order scores of air marshals to Europe to protect U.S.-bound aircraft. Flights out of Gatwick Airport in England received 100 percent coverage, according to U.S. officials.

Al Qaeda bombmaker Ibrahim al-Asiri was again the mastermind of the plot, according to U.S. and other intelligence sources. Asiri designed the bombs in the failed printer-bomb cargo plane plot of 2009 and earlier planted a bomb in the rectum of his brother, who died in a suicide attack on the Saudi intelligence chief. He also made Abdulmutallab's underwear bomb, which failed to detonate properly.

The FBI is currently examining the new bomb and is "exploiting" it for intelligence, Brennan said.

But according to former White House counter-terrorism advisor and current ABC News consultant Richard Clarke, the insider's escape from Yemen could put counter-terror operations at a disadvantage from here on out.

"You have to wonder if this plot was foiled by someone on the inside, whether or not that means that source is blown and therefore they no longer have someone on the inside and would not know about the next plot," Clarke said.

U.S. officials said Fahd al-Quso, the head of operations for AQAP, was killed over the weekend by a U.S. drone strike. Asiri, the bombmaker, is still at large, and is believed to be training other bombmakers and making other bombs, all aimed at U.S. aircraft.

AQAP has been described by numerous U.S. officials as a top security threat to the U.S. homeland, more so even than central al Qaeda formerly led by Osama bin Laden.

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7. [Attack, Afghanistan] Explosive Device Kills Three NATO Troops In Eastern Afghanistan

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://newstro.com/article/explosive-device-kills-3-nato-troops-in-eastern-afghanistan.html>

A roadside bomb exploded in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, killing three coalition service members, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said. A previously unreported death on Friday was also announced. ISAF said three of its service members were killed as a result of an improvised explosive device (IED) attack in eastern Afghanistan on Monday. But because the multinational force defers the release of specific details to national authorities, no other details about the incident were released, including the exact location.

The nationalities of the service members involved were also not immediately disclosed by ISAF, again per its policy. "It is ISAF policy to defer casualty identification procedures to the relevant national authorities," ISAF said in a brief statement, giving no specific details. The alliance does also not report injuries.

Also on Monday, the U.S. Department of Defense reported an American casualty in eastern Afghanistan which had not been previously reported by ISAF. It said 38-year-old Master Sgt. Gregory L. Childs, of Warren, Arkansas, was killed on Friday in Kabul province. The U.S. Department of Defense gave no specific details about the cause of Childs' death, and it was unclear if he died in action or whether he died as a result of an accident or of natural causes. Childs was assigned to the Defense Logistics Agency at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, officials said.

The identity of a U.S. Marine who was shot and killed by a rogue Afghan soldier on Sunday was also released on Monday. The U.S. Department of Defense identified the victim as 25-year-old Sgt. John P. Huling of West Chester, Ohio. He was assigned to 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton in California.

"This incident is under investigation," the department said in a statement, giving no other details. U.S. officials previously said a second American service member was also injured in the shooting attack, although his condition was not released. The rogue Afghan soldier was killed when coalition forces returned fire. The deaths on Friday and Monday raise the number of coalition troops killed in Afghanistan so far this year to 151, according to official figures. A total of 566 ISAF troops were killed in Afghanistan in 2011, down from 711 in 2010. A majority of the fallen troops were American and were killed in the country's south, which is plagued by IED attacks on troops and civilians.

There are currently more than 130,000 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, including some 90,000 U.S. troops and more than 9,500 British soldiers. U.S. President Barack Obama previously ordered a drawdown of 23,000 U.S. troops by the end of this summer, and foreign combat troops are due to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

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8. [Security, Afghanistan] Nine Afghan Insurgents Killed, Weapons Seized

Saturday, 5 May 2012

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2012/05/05/9-Afghan-insurgents-killed-weapons-seized/UPI-75991336231320/

Afghan and coalition forces discovered a weapons cache, killed nine insurgents and detained five others in missions across eastern Afghanistan, officials said.

In Wardak province, the Afghan National Army and coalition forces killed six insurgents and came upon the weapons cache Friday in the Sayyidabad district, International Security Assistance Force said in a release Saturday. Troops seized small arms and ammunition, grenades and mortar rounds used for improvised explosive devices.

In Kapisa province, a coalition airstrike killed three insurgents in the Alah Say district. The individuals were observed setting up mortar fire, the ISAF said.

Afghan Uniform Police in Ghazni province arrested three people in the Deh Yak district, one of whom was positively identified as a known insurgent. The other two tested positive for having recently constructed improvised explosive devices, the release said.

AUP and ANA soldiers arrested two people in Khost province who had 250 kilograms of fertilizer that tested positive for nitrates, ISAF said.

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9. [Security, Afghanistan] ISAF Joint Command Morning Operational Update

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/news/isaf-joint-command-rc-east-operational-update-may-6-2012.html>

An Afghan-led security force supported by coalition troops detained a Taliban leader during an operation in Arghistan district, Kandahar province, today.

The leader conducted roadside bombings against Afghan and coalition troops in Kandahar City and was responsible for moving explosive devices into the city from Zabul province.

The Taliban leader was also suspected of attempting to infiltrate the Afghan National Police.

The security force detained several additional insurgents and seized multiple weapons as a result of this operation.

In other ISAF news throughout Afghanistan:

South

A combined Afghan and coalition security force discovered a weapons cache during a routine patrol in Tarin Kot district, Uruzgan province, yesterday. The cache consisted of small arms ammunition, two hand grenades, one rocket-propelled grenade, five 82 mm recoilless rifle rounds, eight improvised explosive device detonators, nine anti-tank mines, and one heavy weapons mount. A small portion of the cache was confiscated for evaluation and the remainder was destroyed at the scene.

Finally, a combined Afghan and coalition security force conducted a security patrol in Nahr-e Seraj district, Helmand province, Thursday. During the operation, multiple insurgents with weapons moved to fire on the combined force. Assessing an immediate threat, the force engaged the insurgents, killing several. A subsequent search of the compound found multiple improvised explosive device components, as well as 110 pounds of homemade explosives and several small arms weapons. The weapons were confiscated and the IED materials were destroyed on site.

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10. [Attack, Pakistan] Seventeen Persons Including 12 Military Personnel Killed

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.frc.com.pk/linkc/slidercont/541>

At least seventeen persons including twelve Security forces personnel were killed and 37 others injured in a clash between forces and militants in Miranshah, local sources said.

Militants attacked Amin Check Post, located at one kilometer distance on west of Miranshah, the main town of North Waziristan Agency, resulting in killing of seventeen persons including twelve security forces personnel and left 37 others injured, Inter-Services Public relations (ISPR) (ISPR) officials and local sources said.

ISPR officials said that in retaliation security forces killed several militants and destroyed their hideouts, but yet the militants not confirmed or denied the ISPR statement.



It was learnt through reliable sources that militants beheaded soldiers and took their heads along after attack on check post, which was reaction of killing of a top militant commander two days back.

Meanwhile, officials of Political Administration revealed to FRC, “That three security forces personnel were injured when Security forces convoy came under attack in Miranshah on Sunday”. They said that the convoy was on its way towards Datta Khel from Miranshah and came under attack near the Amin Check Post. Three security forces officials were injured who were rushed to the Army Hospital in North Waziristan.

The security forces also retaliated but there are no reports about casualties inflicted on militants, the local tribesmen said that after the attack the security forces started using artilleries targeting the hideouts of the militants.

On Sunday routine curfew was imposed in North Waziristan and civilian movement was restricted on main roads for movement of military convoys. However, in spite of such arrangements Army convoy was attacked by militants.

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11. [Security, Pakistan] Eight Militants, Two Tribal Elders Dead In Fata

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/07-May-2012/8-militants-two-tribal-elders-dead-in-fata>

At least eight militants were killed and two others injured when forces shelled their hideouts in Khadezai area of Orakzai Agency whereas two pro-government tribal elders were killed and nine people sustained injuries when militants armed with weapons fired at two vehicles in Kurram Agency and Parachinar areas on Sunday.

Backed by artillery, forces shelled militants' positions in Khadezai and Kronchkai areas some 18 kilometres away from Gheljo, the headquarters of upper tehsil of Orakzai Agency.

Resultantly, eight militants were killed and two of their hideouts were destroyed completely. Forces have been conducting operation against militants in Orakzai Agency and hundreds of militants have been killed so far. Security forces have claimed that over 90 per cent area of the agency has been cleared of the militants. Operation was now underway in the remaining 10 per cent area and soon this area would also be made clear of the militants, sources said.

Meanwhile, militants in an armed attack on a vehicle killed two pro-government tribal elders in Kurram Agency on Sunday. As per details, two tribal elders and members of a peace committee - Malik Mohamamd Rasool and Malik Mohammad Khan – belonging to Khuidad Khel tribe were on their way in a vehicle when militants near Tarbat area waiting



for them opened indiscriminate fire and killed them on the spot. Malik Mohammad Rasool, is stated to be the brother of Malik Rehan, who is the chief of a local peace committee formed to counter the militants in the area.

In another happening, a flying coach carrying passengers from Parachinar to Peshawar was attacked at Arwali Sakhi Ahmad Shah area. The militants opened fire at the vehicle. As a result of which, nine passengers three of them women sustained injuries. The injured were rushed to a nearby hospital at Alizai area. The law enforcers reached the site and cleared the road for all sorts of traffic and started investigation into the incident.

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12. [Attack, Pakistan] Twin Pakistan Explosions Injure Nine

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

<http://www.canada.com/news/Twin+Pakistan+explosions+injure+Police/6594237/story.html>

Twin bomb explosions Wednesday in Pakistan's northwestern town of Akora Khattak injured nine people including policemen and journalists, police said.

The two bombs exploded in the tomb of a Pashtoon nationalist leader, Ajmal Khattak, spreading panic in the town, 40 kilometres (25 miles) east of Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa province.

"Initial investigations revealed that three time devices had been planted in the tomb, which went off with a big bang but nobody was injured," local police official Hayat Ullah told AFP.

Journalists rushed to the site to cover the event and while they were collecting details of the incident from police, the second remote-controlled blast took place.

"The second blast occurred after more than one hour injuring five policemen and four local television journalists," the official said.

Another senior local police official, Muhammad Hussain also confirmed the incident.

Nobody has so far claimed responsibility for the attacks but provincial information minister Mian Iftikhar Hussain said Islamist militants were responsible for targeting the tomb.

Northwest Pakistan suffers from chronic insecurity, largely connected to the semi-autonomous tribal belt near Afghanistan, which Washington calls the most dangerous place on Earth and a global headquarters of al-Qaida.

Pakistan has battled homegrown insurgents in the tribal belt for years. More than 3,000 soldiers have died but Pakistan has resisted U.S. pressure to do more to eliminate havens used by insurgents fighting the Americans in Afghanistan.

According to an AFP tally, around 5,000 people have been killed in militant attacks across the country since July 2007, when government troops raided an extremist mosque in the capital Islamabad, sparking a bloody insurgency.

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13. [Trend, Somalia] Weekly Security Roundup

Friday, 4 May 2012

http://www.somaliareport.com/index.php/post/3311/Weekly_Security_Roundup

Insecurity across war-torn Somalia this week resulted in the deaths of at least 51 people and more than 53 others were injured. Incidents ranged from the killing of a foreign instructor in Puntland and lawmakers in Galgaduud to al-Shabaab executing civilians to a car bomb in Mogadishu. The incidents occurred mainly in the regions of Awdal, Banadir, Gedo, Galgaduud, Mudug, Hiiraan, and Lower Jubba.

Total Casualties between April 28 - May 4, 2012

Total Deaths: 51

Total Injured: 53

Total Casualties: 104

BARI: South African Trainer Killed in Puntland

28 April, Isku-shuban - A South African instructor of a foreign security firm, Sterling Corporate Services (not Saracen as previously reported by other media), was killed during an anti-piracy operation in Isku-shuban district some 160kms east of Bosaso port city in northeastern Somalia. The deceased mentor was a trainer for Puntland Marine Police Forces and was shot dead by one of his Somali guards following a quarrel between them.

BANADIR: Man Shot Dead in Mogadishu

28 April, Mogadishu - Armed men working with al-Shabaab fighters killed a civilian in Hawl-wadaag district of Mogadishu on Saturday evening, according to witnesses. "An elder was killed near Hared Mosque and he was the local resident of the village," Ahmed Abdullahi, a local resident, told Somalia Report. The suspects came to a local café in the village and shot to death the 50 year old man. Government police forces arrived on the scene, but the perpetrators escaped.

Hiiraan: al-Shabaab Kills Boy in Bula-Burte

28 April, Bula-Burte - The militant group of al-Shabaab executed a teenage boy in a public area of Bula-Burte, 116kms south of Beledweyne in central Somalia, on Friday afternoon. The militants alleged the teenager was spying for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces based in Hiiraan region. Locals told the media that the militants disseminated information about the incident through a vehicle with microphones and loudspeakers that drove in the city.

BANADIR: Grenade Attack in a Cinema Claims Four

28 April, Mogadishu - Four people were killed and more than 11 others wounded in a grenade attack in a local cinema near Tarabunka square in Mogadishu on Saturday night. The attack occurred around 07:40pm local time and most of the victims were teenagers from IDP camps who came the video

showroom for entertainment. The assailant hurled two grenades into the video showroom where the teenagers watching Indian films according to one of the teenagers who talked to Somalia Report. Most of the injured people were admitted to Banadir Hospital in Mogadishu. The mother of a victim told Somalia Report that she was at a home next to the cinema when she heard the explosion. "I ran to the cinema, because I knew my children are there and thank Allah my two boys survived while one of them got minor injuries on the right hand.

BANADIR: TFG, al-Shabaab Fight Outside Mogadishu

28 April, Mogadishu - Two people have been killed and nine others injured following a clash between government soldiers and al-Shabaab militants on the outskirts of Mogadishu on Saturday night. The fight broke out after the armed extremist fighters launched an offensive against the military forces of the TFG based in Kahda of Dharkenley district. Ahmed Abdi, an official of the Dharkenley local administration, told Somalia Report that fighters from al-Shabaab attempt to disrupt the ongoing stability in the district and insisted the government soldiers resisted the assailants.

BANADIR: Grenade Attack in Mogadishu Claims One and Injuries Four

28 April, Mogadishu - A grenade attack in Mogadishu killed one civilian and injured four others on Saturday. The victim was an engineer who was building a nearby house in the roundabout of Bakara Market. The attacker hurled the grenade to target government police forces near Bakara Market, although no casualties are reported among the forces.

BANADIR: Three Government Forces Killed in Mogadishu

29 April, Mogadishu - Three government soldiers were killed in Maana-Boolyo village in Shibis district of Mogadishu, according to witnesses. The soldiers were killed by alleged al-Shabaab fighters, while they were patrolling in the village. The bodies of the soldiers were taken to a TFG base in Fagax Junction. Local residents and officials of the TFG forces confirmed to Somalia Report that two men armed with pistols killed the soldiers and managed to escape the scene.

BANADIR: Fighting Erupts Among TFG Forces in Mogadishu

29 April, Mogadishu - A major rift broke out between TFG forces in Hodan district of Mogadishu in which one civilian was killed and five others were injured. Speaking to Somalia Report, Ahmed Abdurahman, a commander of TFG forces based in Tarabunka Square in Mogadishu, expressed his concerns about the incident. The rift comes after when some of the government troops tried to loot a humanitarian food for the internally displaced people in Hodan. The casualties were taken to local hospitals in Mogadishu.

AWDAL: Three People Killed in a Car Accident

29 April, Gabiley - Three people died and two others were wounded in a car accident in Dilla village Awdal region in northern Somalia along the road between Gabiley and Dilla in Awdal region. The injured people were taken to Gabiley local clinics.

BAKOOL: Eight Killed and Dozens Wounded

30 April, Hudur - At least eight people have been killed and 11 others were injured in a battle that broke out in the south-western region of Bakool. The clash erupted when the TFG forces backed by the Ethiopian forces were attacked by al-Shabaab militants in three different directions and the battle continued more than five hours, according to the locals.

LOWER JUBBA: Battles in Badhaadhe Leaves Five Dead

30 April, Badhaadhe - At least five people were dead and three others wounded after heavy fighting broke out between al-Shabaab and TFG forces, supported by Kenyan forces, on the outskirts of Badhaadhe district in southern Somalia. The clash came after the al-Shabaab militants attacked bases of the joint forces in Badhaadhe district, according to Raskamboni officials who spoke to Somalia Report through a telephone.

LOWER SHABELLE: al-Shabaab Executes Civilians in Afgooye

April 30, Afgooye - Al-Shabaab militants in Lower Shabelle region executed two civilians in Afgooye district of southern Somalia, residents said. The bodies were found at Afgooye district, 30kms from Mogadishu, on Monday morning. One of the bodies was found near the checkpoint of Ismael Restaurant, while the other one was slain in the center of the district, according to the residents who spoke to Somalia Report.

BANADIR: Blast in KM4 Kills Four

1 May, Mogadishu - At least four people were killed and ten others were wounded in two separate bomb blasts that rocked in Mogadishu, on Tuesday afternoon. In what appears to be a forced suicide car bomber, the perpetrators detonated a four door sedan in the strategic road that links Mogadishu's main airport and KM4 junction, which is regularly used by TFG and African Union (AMISOM) vehicles. Locals told Somalia Report the man driving the car was a well known businessman, Arafat, who sold cars to the government and was not aligned with al-Shabaab.

BANADIR: Grenade Attack in Bakara Market Claims Two

May 1 Mogadishu - Two people were killed and 10 others were injured after a grenade was thrown into a busy intersection of Bakara market on Tuesday. The victims are mainly civilians, because the attackers hurled the grenade in a very busy bus stop near market, the largest market in the capital.

GALGADUUD: Suicide Blast Kills Lawmakers in Central Somalia

May 1, Dhusamareeb - At least seven people were killed, including two MPs, one bodyguard and four civilians, while seven others were injured in a suicide bomb attack in a restaurant of a hotel in a Dhusamareeb of Central Somalia on Tuesday. The suicide targeted a lunch gathering of high ranking officials of lawmakers and politicians from the central regions of the country. Yussuf Mire Seeraar and Abdiweli Aw Mohamoud were the two lawmakers killed in the blast. The politicians were visiting central

Somalia over the last days and very busy to set up a regional administration in central regions of Somalia.

HIRAAN: Government Soldier Kills a Civilian in Beledweyne

May 1, Beledweyne - TFG soldiers killed a civilian in Beledweyne in central Somalia on Tuesday evening following a quarrel. The government soldier who killed the man was not arrested and escaped the scene.

MUDUG: Radio Journalist Shot Dead in Galkayo

May 2, Galkayo - Unknown masked gunmen shot dead a Somali radio reporter in the northern city of Galkayo of Mudug region, the fifth journalist to be killed in Somalia this year alone, colleagues and police confirmed on Thursday. The journalist, Farhan Jeemis Abdulle, who worked for Radio Daljir, was gunned down late on Wednesday as he headed home shortly after leaving the radio station.

HIIRAAN: al-Shabaab Takes Control of Mataban District

May 2, Mataban - At least two civilians have been killed and five others were injured after heavy fighting between al-Shabaab militants and moderate Islamist ASWJ broke out in Mataban district of central Somalia. The victims include two al-Shabaab fighters and three ASWJ soldiers. The attack comes after al-Shabaab fighters attacked and took over control of Mataban district. Most of the residents in the district fled from the stray bullets and automatic machine guns used by the two sides.

BANADIR: Fighting in Mogadishu Claims One

May 3, Mogadishu - At least one person has been killed and one other was injured after unknown gunmen attacked a TFG base in Hamar Jadiid village of Wardhigley district in Mogadishu. The attack occurred on Thursday night, and continued for nearly two hours, according to the locals of Hamar jadiid who spoke to Somalia Report. Al-Shabaab claimed the responsibility for the attack.

BANADIR: Four Government Soldiers Killed in Mogadishu

May 3, Mogadishu - More than four government soldiers were killed in Mogadishu on Thursday evening. The victims were killed in Yaqshid, Kaaran and Shibis districts of Mogadishu and include a senior officer of the TFG forces in Mogadishu.

GALGADUUD: Two Alleged al-Shabaab Fighters Executed in Dhusa-Mareeb

May 4, Dhusa-mareeb - Two suspected al-Shabaab members were executed in Dhusa-mareeb, the provincial headquarter of Galguud region, after being accused of the suicide blast that killed two lawmakers in central Somalia by the ASWJ militia. The alleged men were in the central prison of Dhusa-mareeb, although some fighters of ASWJ took them and shot them to death in the outskirts of Dhusa-mareeb, according to ASWJ officials in the region.

MUDUG: Blast in Galkayo Claims Two Lives

May 4, Galkayo - At least two civilians were killed while one other was injured after a landmine explosion occurred in southern Galkayo near the house of the Galmudug President Mohamed Ahmed Aalin on Friday afternoon, according to witnesses. The landmine exploded in the Wadajir village of Galkayo and the injured woman was admitted in the Galkayo Hospital of Mudug region.

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14. [Attack, Mali] Mali Islamists Attack UNESCO Holy Site In Timbuktu

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/05/us-mali-timbuktu-unesco-idUSBRE84407Z20120505>

Malian fighters from the Ansar Dine Islamist group attacked and burned the tomb of one of the town's saints, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, residents and a regional official said on Saturday.

The militants broke off doors, windows and wooden gates from the grave and burned them, they said, in the first reported attack on a shrine in Mali.

El Hadj Baba Haidara, an elected member of parliament from Timbuktu told Reuters some young people were discussing how to react despite being unarmed.

"There is a risk the people may revolt because this is something that affects their dignity. This tomb is sacred, it is too difficult to bear," Haidara said.

Ansar Dine, along with Tuareg rebels and other armed groups, swept through northern Mali in March and April, seizing the northern half of the country and its ancient towns of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal after the government collapsed in a March 22 coup.

While the rebel MNLA has declared an independent state in the north, al Qaeda-linked Ansar Dine - led by veteran Tuareg leader Iyad Ag Ghaly - has rejected that idea and said the group's objective was to impose Islamic law in Mali.

In 2001, the Taliban dynamited and destroyed two 6th century statues of Buddha measuring 55 and 37 meters (180 and 121 feet) high, carved into a cliff in Bamiyan in central Afghanistan.

Timbuktu Muslims on their way to Friday worship at the tomb of Sidi Mahmoud Ben Amar and those of other saints were stopped and threatened by armed men from Ansar Dine, one resident said.

"What you are doing is haram! (forbidden). Ask God directly rather than the dead," one of the armed men told the residents, according to Ahmed Ibrahim, a resident who witnessed the scene.

Some Islamists view shrines as idolatry but traditional Muslims, especially Sufis, see shrines as part of accepted Islamic custom. Salafists have attacked several Sufi shrines in Egypt and Libya in the past year.

"After uttering those words, three of them (armed men) entered the mausoleum, ripped and burnt pieces of white clothing that surrounded the tomb of the saint in front of everyone," Ibrahim said.

Haidara told Reuters the act by the Islamist group could spark a violent reaction from the population, and that he had urged the U.N. body to help protect Timbuktu's heritage sites.

"They attacked the grave, broke doors, windows and wooden gates that protect it. They brought it outside and burn it, because to build a tomb is contrary to the principles of Islam," he said. The men said they would return to destroy other tombs.

No one at UNESCO was immediately available to comment.

"We have learned with indignation of the desecration of tombs perpetrated by lawless individuals. The government condemns in the strongest terms this unspeakable act in the name of Islam, a religion of tolerance and respect for human dignity," Mali's government said in a statement read on national television.

Timbuktu has 333 tombs of holy saints among which 16 are classified as UNESCO World Heritage Sites including that of Sidi Mahamoud Ben Amar, a learned scholar considered the most sacred in Timbuktu, Haidara said.

The town has been a World Heritage Site since 1988 and UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova in April appealed to the rebels to spare its "outstanding earthen architectural wonders".

These include the Sankore, Sidi Yahia and Djingarei-ber mosques - the latter Timbuktu's oldest, built from mud bricks and wood in 1325 - the famous manuscript libraries and the 16 mausoleums of Timbuktu.



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15. [Security, Nigeria] Three Bombs Uncovered In Bayero Varsity Kano

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/05/breaking-news-three-bombs-uncovered-in-bayero-varsity-kano/>

Unknown persons, Tuesday morning planted multiple high calibre time bombs in three locations at the Bayero University Kano (BUK) old campus in the commercial city.

The locations are the Faculty of Science, Sports Complex and in front of the Sub-Dean's office, Faculty of Law of the school.

Eyewitness account told Vanguard that "a strange object was found in front of the Faculty of Law.

The account further revealed that the police were alerted who quickly deployed its men to the scene adding that "everybody around the area has been evacuated to safety"

There is a total confusion as students and lecturers and non-academic staff could be seen running out of the campus", an eyewitness told Vanguard

Tuesday incident is the second in recent weeks as similar high calibre bombs were uncovered two weeks ago at the Sociology Department of the institution.

Confirming the incident, the police image maker in the state, ASP Magaji Musa Majia told Vanguard on phone that the police were alerted by the authorities of BUK..

Magaji Musa Majia revealed that the Command has deployed anti Bomb disposal squad to the scene.

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16. [Law Enforcement, Zambia] Police Arrest Man Found With Explosives

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://tumfweko.com/2012/05/08/police-arrest-man-found-with-explosives/>

Police in Solwezi have apprehended a 32 year old man of Mwiya village in chief Kapijimpanga's area for being found in possession of 27 detonators and 9 explosives.

Northwestern province deputy police commission Bonny Kapeso said the explosives and detonators were found hidden in the man's bag who has since been identified as Levy Chola.

Mr. Kapeso said the explosives are alleged to have been meant for sale to fish mongers who use them for killing fish.

He disclosed that police are currently investigating the source of the explosives as the suspect confessed that he had bought them from an unnamed individual in Chingola.

The suspect who is in police custody was cornered in Kyawama after police picked him for harrasing his mother and upon being searched was found with the explosives.

Mr. Kapeso has cautioned members of the public to report anyone found selling such explosives saying doing so for the good of the community as they are extremely dangerous.

He emphasized that it is an offence for an individual to sell the explosives without authority.

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17. [Security, Somalia] TFG Forces Foil Suicide Attack Targeting Military Base In Mogadishu

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://www.bar-kulan.com/2012/05/08/tfg-forces-foil-suicide-attack-targeting-military-base-in-mogadishu/>

Somali forces in Mogadishu have seized a man wearing a jacket full of explosives who allegedly wanted to detonate himself inside AMISOM base Mogadishu, officials say.

Officials say government forces stationed at Ex Control Afgoye foiled the alleged suicide attack after stopping the man who came from rebel held area of Elasha Biyaha heading towards TFG and AMISOM military base near the area.

The area military commander, Ahmed Abdullahi told state-run broadcaster that the suspect is now in custody and will be handed over to the relevant government agencies.

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18. [Security, Somalia] Three Alleged Militants Killed By Their Own Actions

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

<http://www.bar-kulan.com/2012/05/09/three-alleged-militants-killed-by-their-own-actions/>

Three people have died in two separate incidents where bombs they were allegedly planting exploded on Wednesday.

In the first incident, a suspected militant man was killed by a remotely detonated bomb that he was allegedly burying along a road in an area between Bar-Ubah junction and Black Sea junction in Mogadishu, making him a victim of his own actions.

State-run broadcaster reported that the ill-fated man was a member of the outlawed Al-Shabaab militant group who fall victims of his own hands.

In the second incident, two people including a woman were killed in El-Abdi Dere area of El-bur district after an explosive device they were planting went off, killing them on the spot.

Area district security boss Abdi Hassan Mohamed told Bar-kulan that the two were plotting an attack against Ahlu Sunna militias and their allied Ethiopian troops.

He said their investigations revealed that the female militant has just graduated from a Uganda a university in Uganda and recently joined the militant group.

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19. [Attack, Nigeria] Boko Haram Kills Two Prison Wardens In Borno

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/boko-haram-kills-two-prison-wardens-in-borno/115177/>

A prison has been broken into in the lowly town of Kumshe, in Borno State by gunmen suspected to be members of the Boko Haram sect, killing two prison wardens and setting free inmates.

It was gathered that the gunmen initially attacked a police station in Banki, the Nigerian border town with Cameroon but were repelled by the policemen on duty.

An eyewitness who spoke to journalists from Banki, a town in Bama Local Government Area of Borno, one of the places where the state of emergency was declared by President Goodluck Jonathan over four months ago, said the gunmen attacked the border town at about 11am on Thursday.

“Sporadic gunshots were heard in the exchange of fire between them and the police, and this went on for about 20 minutes.”

He said when it dawned on the gunmen that they could not penetrate the police station, they took leave but they later regrouped and attacked the prison in Kumshe, about 40 kilometres away but within the same Bama Local Government.

Speaking on the attack on the prison, a police source said the gunmen came fully armed with explosives and sophisticated guns.

According to him, they went straight for the prison and after gunning down two prison wardens, the other officials took to their heels and the gunmen set the prisoners free.

Spokesman of the Police in Borno State, Samuel Tizhe confirmed the incident.

He disclosed that the Police have “so far arrested 23 persons in connection with the attacks.”

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20. [Security, Somalia] Woman Killed During Shabaab Suicide Training

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/3329/Woman_Killed_During_Shabaab_Suicide_Training

A young female and a prominent member of the al-Shabaab militia died on Tuesday afternoon in El-Abdi Dhere, 35 km south of El-Buur town in Somalia's Galgadud region, while mishandling an improvised explosive device during training with the Islamic terrorist organization.

Dahabo Omar (Aga Barur), an educated woman who earned a master's certificate from a Ugandan university, died when her explosives jacket (vest) exploded during suicide bomb training. Officials told Somalia Report she was one of many al-Shabaab fighters who were undergoing explosives training at the house in El Abdi Dhere when the blast occurred.

Soon after the explosion, soldiers from the the pro-government Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamma (ASWJ) militia reached the scene and initiated security operations, arresting six men, according to a local witness.

"I heard a very loud explosion, but didn't know what happened. It was not something we are used to here. Immediately after the explosion all the villagers reached the scene, which was a house in the village, but nobody went in the compound fearing that another explosion might happen. Soon ASWJ soldiers arrived and asked what happened. Some of them went in and so did I. What I saw was horrific. There was blood everywhere in the room," Abdi Qasim, a local resident, told Somalia Report.

The head of the security of El Buur district of Galgadud region, Abdi Hassan, told Somalia Report what he witnessed.

"Immediately after the explosion our forces reached El Abdi Dhere, which is the place where the failed explosion occurred. We collected the pieces of the girl in order to bury them. Her trainer also lost his life in the blast. It is not good for someone to handle explosives which they don't have any knowledge about. Al-Shabaab brainwashes the youth, both boys and girls, and to make sure they persuade them to commit suicide. If it is the right thing to do, then why aren't their leaders doing it? It is simply because they are going to die which they don't want at all," he said.

He added that Dahabo was from the Galgadud region and volunteered to carry out the suicide mission.

"There had been Land Rover vehicles full of petrol and prepared to take Dahabo on her suicide operation after the short training. The targeted area is not yet known, but we will double our efforts and try to curb their evil operations," said Mr. Hassan.

Reliable sources also added that ASJW executed the six men they arrested in conjunction with the failed bomb explosion. ASWJ claimed the men were Shabaab since they were unknown to the local community and near the incident at the time of the explosion.

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21. [Attack, Yemen] Al-Qaida Militants Kill 20 Soldiers, Capture 25 In Surprise Attack On Army Base In South Yemen

Monday, 7 May 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/airstrike-kills-senior-al-qaida-militant-wanted-in-2000-bombing-of-the-uss-cole-in-yemen/2012/05/06/gIQAcW775T_story.html?td=sm_facebook&utm_campaign=wpapp

Al-Qaida militants staged a surprise attack Monday on a Yemeni army base in the south, killing 20 soldiers and capturing 25 just hours after a U.S. drone strike killed a senior figure in the terror network wanted in connection with the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen.

It was not immediately clear if the pre-dawn attack on the military base in the southern Abyan province was in retaliation for the death of Fahd al-Quso, a top al-Qaida leader on the FBI's most wanted list.

The militants managed to reach the base both from the sea and by land, gunning down troops and making away with weapons and other military hardware after the blitz attack, Yemeni military officials said.

Government forces later shelled militant positions elsewhere in Abyan, killing 16 militants, said the officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Yemen has been waging an offensive on al-Qaida, whose fighters took advantage of the country's political turmoil during the past year to expand their hold in the south, seizing entire cities and towns and large swathes of land. Abyan's provincial capital of Zinjibar has been held by al-Qaida for a year.

The new Yemeni president, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, has promised improved cooperation with the U.S. to combat the militants. On Saturday, he said the fight against al-Qaida is in its early stages. Hadi took over in February from longtime authoritarian leader Ali Abdullah Saleh.

On Sunday, al-Quso, the top al-Qaida leader, was hit by a missile as he stepped out of his vehicle along with another operative in the southern Shabwa province, Yemeni military officials said.

The drone strike was carried out by the CIA, after an extended surveillance operation by the CIA and U.S. military, two U.S. officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Al-Quso, 37, was on the FBI's most wanted list, with a \$5 million reward for information leading to his capture. He was indicted in the U.S. for his role in the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in the harbor of Aden, Yemen, in which 17 American sailors were killed and 39 injured.

He served more than five years in a Yemeni prison for his role in the attack and was released in 2007. He briefly escaped prison in 2003 but later turned himself in to serve the rest of his sentence.

A telephone text message claiming to be from al-Qaida's media arm confirmed al-Quso was killed in the strike.

He was also one of the most senior al-Qaida leaders publicly linked to the 2009 Christmas airliner attack and allegedly met in Yemen with the suspected Nigerian bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, before the Nigerian left to execute his failed attack over Detroit with a bomb concealed in his underwear.

In December 2010, al-Quso was designated a global terrorist by the State Department, an indication that his role in al-Qaida's Yemen offshoot, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, had grown more prominent.

Local Yemeni official Abu Bakr bin Farid and the Yemeni Embassy in Washington confirmed al-Quso was killed in Rafd, a remote mountain valley in Shabwa. It is the area where many al-Qaida leaders are believed to have taken cover, including the U.S.-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed in a U.S. airstrike last year.

Al-Quso's association with al-Qaida dates back more than a decade, when he met with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. Bin Laden allegedly told him to "eliminate the infidels from the Arabian Peninsula."

From there, al-Quso rose through the ranks. He was assigned in Aden to videotape the bombing of the USS Cole but fell asleep. Despite the lapse, he was declared the regional leader in Aden. He was also believed to have played a prominent role in al-Qaida's attack and the capture last year of Zinjibar.

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22. [Attack, Syria] Syrian Forces Kill Five In Damascus, Aleppo Protests

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/04/us-syria-idUSBRE84319U20120504>

Syrian forces killed at least five people on Friday when they fired at demonstrations calling for the downfall of President Bashar al-Assad in the capital Damascus and the northern city of Aleppo, activists said.

The shootings occurred despite a three-week-old ceasefire agreement aimed at ending 14 months of bloodshed in Syria, part of a wider peace plan that international mediator Kofi Annan's spokesman said was still "on track".

The United States said on Thursday that a new international approach may be needed if the plan fails, accusing Assad of making "no effort" to implement it so far.

Annan is due to brief the Security Council next week.

Assad says he is fighting foreign-backed "terrorists" and his international friends, including in Moscow, point out that rebels too have staged attacks in breach of the ceasefire.

Three people were killed when security forces fired on a demonstration in the Kfar Souseh district of Damascus, and a teenager was shot dead in the poor neighborhood of Tadamun, activists said.

Another person was shot dead in Aleppo, a day after security forces and students with knives attacked a university protest against Assad, killing at least four people in Syria's once relatively peaceful commercial hub and second city.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said three people were killed overnight in Aleppo, and put the death toll in violence across the country over the last 24 hours at more than 20.

Small groups of United Nations observers have deployed across the country to assess compliance by Assad's forces and their rebel opponents with the April 12 ceasefire.

Their leader, Norwegian Major-General Robert Mood, has said they have had a "calming effect" in their areas of operation, adding that they cannot be expected to solve Syria's crisis, in which thousands have been killed since March last year.

Hundreds of people, including civilians, security forces and rebels, have been killed since the ceasefire was agreed.

PLAN ON TRACK

Annan's six-point plan includes a ceasefire, deployment of observers and free access for journalists and humanitarian aid, leading to talks on a political solution.

"I would say that the Annan plan is on track and a crisis that has been going on for over a year is not going to be resolved in a day or a week," Fawzi said.

"There are signs on the ground of movement, albeit it's slow and small. There are also signs behind the scenes you don't see because this mediation effort by definition is conducted below the radar," Fawzi said.

Security was tight across the capital Damascus on Friday, with checkpoints and roadblocks throughout the city.

Roads leading to Midan - site of a suicide bombing last Friday which killed at least nine people - were cut off. Seven buses full of security were parked at one entrance to Midan.

Armed men in plain clothes also manned checkpoints while at one roundabout two soldiers sat behind sandbags manning a machine gun.

YouTube footage from Tadamun, which could not be independently verified, showed troops pointing automatic rifles at youths hurling rocks in the poor district on the southern edge of Damascus. Activists said 17-year old protester Mohammad Darwish was killed by army gunfire.

Mood, the chief U.N. observer, said in Homs on Thursday that his mission was steadily growing, with a total of 50 monitors in the country which would be doubled within weeks.

"We have reinforced our permanent teams in Hama and Deraa with an extra two monitors in each city," he said from the al-Safir hotel in Homs, where six monitors are based permanently.

Around 300 monitors will be deployed by the end of May.

Syria's uprising began in March 2011 with peaceful demonstrations inspired by a wave of Arab revolts against long-ruling autocratic leaders, but it has become increasingly militarized in response to Assad's violent crackdown.

The U.N. says more than 9,000 people have died in the crackdown, while the Syrian government says it has lost at least 2,600 of its forces to "foreign-backed terrorists".

Despite the turmoil, Syria plans to hold a parliamentary election on Monday under a new constitution which has allowed the creation of new political parties and formally ended decades of monopoly by Assad's ruling Baath Party.

Authorities say the election is part of a reform process, but the opposition dismisses it as a sham.

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23. [Security, Syria] Heavy Fighting Rocks Eastern Syria

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/06/us-syria-east-idUSBRE84502Z20120506>

Heavy fighting between rebels and government troops erupted overnight in the capital of an oil producing province in eastern Syria, residents and activists said on Sunday, the latest escalation of violence in a tribal area bordering Iraq.

Rebels armed with rocket-propelled grenades attacked tank positions in the eastern sector of the city of Deir al-Zor on the Euphrates river, in response to an army offensive against several towns and villages in the province that have killed tens of people in recent days, they said.

"The fighting subsided early in the morning. We do not have a death toll because no one is daring to go into the streets," said Ghaith Abdelsalam, an opposition activist who lives near Ghassan Abboud roundabout. At least five army tanks had been deployed on each street leading to the roundabout, a flashpoint for the fighting, he added.

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24. [Attack, Syria] Explosions In Two Syrian Cities Kill At Least Three

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/06/us-syria-explosion-idUSBRE84406F20120506>

An explosion killed several people in Aleppo and two blasts hit a Damascus highway on Saturday in further signs that rebels fighting to topple President Bashar al-Assad are shifting tactics towards homemade explosives.

Syria's state news agency said three people had been killed, one of them a child, and 21 wounded by a booby-trapped car in the northern city of Aleppo.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Humans Rights, which monitors the 14-month-old revolt against Assad, said the blast killed five and wrecked a car wash in Tal al-Zarazeer, one of the poorest suburbs of Syria's commercial hub.

A member of the rebel Free Syrian Army claimed responsibility for the bombing, telling Reuters in Beirut that the car wash was used by members of a pro-Assad militia.

"We placed a bomb inside a car," Ali al-Halabi said, naming the car wash owner and accusing him of raping a woman in front of her husband. "I went to the area afterwards and saw seven bodies and many wounded."

Aleppo has been spared the worst of a conflict that has turned some cities into battle zones, but on Thursday security forces and students wielding knives attacked anti-Assad protesters at the university, killing four and detaining 200.

In Damascus, two bombs exploded on central al-Thawra Street, destroying nine cars. There was no word on casualties.

Reuters journalists saw mangled mini buses and a smashed yellow taxi being dragged away from the area later.

"We heard a big explosion," said a resident of the nearby Souq Sarouja neighborhood. "The security forces have blocked off the area now."

The bombings dealt another blow to a crumbling U.N.-backed truce. Fifty out of a planned total of 300 United Nations observers are now in Syria to monitor the ceasefire declared on April 12, but their presence has not halted the violence.

Activists said at least 37 people were killed on Friday when security forces fired on protesters around the country.

Deadly blasts have shaken major cities as insurgents seek to even the odds between their outgunned forces and the tanks, artillery and helicopters in Assad's military arsenal.

"We want to show foreign journalists in Syria that Damascus is not silent, to embarrass the regime," said Emad, an activist who lives near al-Thawra Street, giving only his first name for fear of arrest.

On April 30, explosions blew the fronts off buildings in the northern town of Idlib, where state TV reported nine people killed and 100 wounded, including security personnel.

Three days earlier, a suicide bomber killed nine, including security men, at a Damascus mosque, the Interior Ministry said.

An Islamist group calling itself the Support Front for the People of the Levant claimed responsibility for that bombing and for an April 24 attack on the Iranian cultural consulate in Damascus. Iran is one of Syria's closest allies.

Assad has long argued that he is combating foreign-backed "armed terrorist groups" rather than a popular uprising. Syrian officials say rebels have killed more than 2,600 soldiers and police. The United Nations estimates that the security forces have killed more than 9,000 people since the rebellion began.



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25. [Attack, Bahrain] Bahrain Says Home-Made Bomb Wounds Four Policemen

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/05/us-bahrain-idUSBRE8440AO20120505>

An improvised bomb wounded four Bahraini policemen on Saturday, a commander said, as police clashed again with protesters demanding the release of a jailed rights activist on hunger strike. Unrest has racked Bahrain for more than a year, with mainly majority Shi'ite protesters demanding more democracy and an end to what they see as discrimination in the Sunni-ruled kingdom.

"The officers were dealing with saboteurs who were terrorizing citizens ... and damaging public and private property," Public Security Chief Major-General Tariq al-Hassan told the state-run Bahrain News Agency. One policeman was critically wounded by the early morning blast in the village of Bani Jamra, west of the capital Manama, and the others suffered burns, Hassan said.

Protests to demand the release of Abdulhadi al-Khawaja have been taking place daily across the Gulf Arab island state, which crushed mass street protests last year with the help of troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Khawaja has been on hunger strike for three months, according to his family. Protests were held later on Saturday in the northern Samaheej area, with riot police firing tear gas to disperse demonstrators, residents said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Also on Saturday, authorities detained Nabeel Rajab, a prominent activist who heads the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, at Manama airport as he returned from Beirut, the Interior Ministry said on its Twitter page, adding that he was wanted under a prosecution order for unspecified reasons.

Saudi Arabia said on Saturday it had received requests for financial aid from Bahrain under a facility set up by Gulf Arab states during the Arab uprisings last year.

"We are now discussing (last year's aid pledge) and we have actually received some requests... from Bahrain, and we will be finalizing the finance package with them," Finance Minister Ibrahim Allassaf told reporters after a meeting of finance ministers from the Gulf Cooperation Council in Riyadh.

The six-member bloc agreed last year to give \$10 billion to Oman and Bahrain, two of its members that faced unrest inspired by uprisings which have toppled four Arab autocrats.

Western human rights groups say Khawaja and 13 other opposition figures in prison for their role in last year's protests are prisoners of conscience and should be freed.

Last month the Formula One grand prix returned to Bahrain despite protests. Last year it was postponed, reinstated and then cancelled due to the uprising and bloody crackdown.

Bahrain's king ratified constitutional reforms on Thursday that the government hopes will help end a year of protests, but the main opposition party denounced them as inadequate and said the struggle for democratic reforms would continue in the island state, which hosts the U.S. Fifth Fleet.

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26. [Attack, Syria] Bomb Blast In Syrian Capital Destroys Nine Cars

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://news.yahoo.com/bomb-blast-syrian-capital-destroys-9-cars-082229462.html>

An explosive planted under an army vehicle has exploded in the Syrian capital, damaging nine cars. Witnesses say no one was injured in the blast.

The explosion early Saturday shook a downtown Damascus neighborhood near a military food cooperative and left a crater in the street.

Such explosions have become frequent as Syria's uprising against President Bashar Assad grows increasingly militarized. Many in the opposition have taken up arms since protesters first took to the street in March 2011, prompting a government crackdown.

The U.N. says more than 9,000 people have been killed.

No one has claimed responsibility for the blast.

Earlier this week, attacks on a government security compound and the country's central bank killed nine and injured 100.

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27. [Special Interest, Yemen] US: CIA Thwarts New Al-Qaida Underwear Bomb Plot

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.keprtv.com/news/national/Foiled-Attempt-150484815.html>

The Associated Press has learned the CIA thwarted a plot by al-Qaida's affiliate in Yemen to destroy a U.S.-bound airliner using a bomb with a new design around the one-year anniversary of the killing of Osama bin Laden.

U.S. officials say the plot involved an upgrade of the underwear bomb that failed to detonate aboard a jetliner over Detroit on Christmas 2009. This new bomb was also built to be used in a passenger's underwear but contained a more refined detonation system.

The would-be suicide bomber was told to buy a ticket on the airliner of his choosing and decide the timing of the attack. It's not immediately clear what happened to the would-be bomber.

The U.S. officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive case.

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28. [Trend, Iran, Syria] Despite Embargo, Iran And Syria Freely Import Weapons

Thursday, 3 May 2012

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/155415#.T6kmX1KRM14>

Despite a worldwide arms embargo, Iran has been able to import over a half billion dollars' worth of weapons over the past several years, while Syria was able to get nearly \$200 million in imported weapons in recent years.

The figures came from a report submitted to the United Nations Thursday by international aid agency Oxfam, based on information supplied by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Altogether, the report says, countries under full or partial UN arms embargo were able to import over \$2 billion in arms between 2000 and 2010, the period covered in the report. During that time, there were 26 such UN-declared embargos.

In 2007, the UN called on member states to “vigilantly enforce” the arms embargos imposed on countries accused of violating human rights or of failing to comply with the UN or other countries on promoting peace. However, the report says, apparently not all UN-member states – especially China and Russia – have been doing their part. Most of the weapons acquired by Iran came from China, while Russia has been “fingered” as the main supplier to Syria.



The problem, said an Oxfam official, is that no one is enforcing the embargos that are imposed. “Existing arms embargos are far too easy to break or ignore, said Ann MacDonald, who heads the Oxfam campaign against illegal arms imports.” The lack of international regulation means that states under embargo have been importing whatever weapons they choose with impunity.”

A new method of controlling arms shipments is needed, but “the challenge is to ensure the new treaty is really strong. It must unambiguously stop arms transfers where they would fuel conflict, poverty or human rights abuses,” she said, adding that world trade in coffee, cocoa, and bananas is more right now more closely regulated than arms sales. “How can the sale of bananas be more tightly controlled than the sale of machine guns? It just doesn’t make sense,” MacDonald added.

Speaking Wednesday, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Mahdi Akhondzadeh's slammed the U.S. and other Western countries for their efforts to halt Iran's nuclear program. At a meeting on nuclear non-proliferation in Vienna, Akhondzadeh said that “certain nuclear weapon states” were continuing to develop nuclear weapons themselves, despite signing various non-proliferation treaties. Akhondzadeh did not name names, but observers said it was likely he was referring to the U.S.,

Germany, and France, all of which pressed Iran to attend talks on Tehran's nuclear program, scheduled for later this month.

"Certain nuclear weapon states are expected to display sincerity and political will rather than hypocrisy with regard to their nuclear disarmament obligations," Akhondzadeh added.

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29. [Security, Georgia] Police Say Explosive Device Defused In Zugdidi

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=24726>

The Georgian Interior Ministry said on Friday morning that it had detained “an individual who crossed administrative border line from the Russian occupied territory of Abkhazia and smuggled explosive materials to Zugdidi”, a town in western Georgia close to the breakaway Abkhazia.

The ministry said in a brief statement, that the explosive material was defused by sappers.

An area outside a local prosecutor’s office in Zugdidi was sealed off by the police on Friday morning; the Georgian media sources are reporting that probe outside the prosecutor’s office was related to an explosive device, which was found there.

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30. [Security, Iraq] Finding Weapons Cache Comprising 120 Iranian Made IEDs In Mosul

Saturday, 5 May 2012

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=FLFJEE

Security force found today weapons and ammos cache eastern Mosul.

A source in Nineveh police told NINA correspondent that an army force found today a weapons and ammos cache in 7 Neisan area, eastern Mosul, referring that the cache was found depending on intelligence information that the force got during interrogation with a detainees that was arrested earlier.

He added that the cache comprises 6 guns, 120 Iranian made IEDs, TNT, hand grenades, and missiles launchers.

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31. [Attack, Syria] Syria Blast Near UN Convoy Going To Deraa

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18001942>

An explosion has hit a Syrian military truck escorting a convoy of UN observers near the city of Deraa, just seconds after UN staff had passed by.

The head of the UN team, Maj Gen Robert Mood, was in the convoy, but neither he nor any of the other monitors was hurt.

Eyewitnesses said at least three Syrian soldiers were wounded. The windows of the truck were shattered.

The observers are in Syria as part of the joint UN-Arab League peace plan and began deploying last month.

There are now about 70 monitors in Syria but their presence has had no effect in quelling the violence.

Deraa was where the uprising against the government of President Bashar al-Assad began in March 2011.

An Associated Press reporter travelling in the UN convoy said the explosion blew out the military truck's windows and caused a plume of thick black smoke.

It is not clear who was behind the blast. However, the opposition Syrian National Council is blaming the government, saying the explosion is part of a campaign to drive the UN monitors out of the country.

Maj Gen Mood condemned the blast, saying the observers would remain focused on their mission.

"This is a graphic example of violence that Syrians do not need. It is essential to halt the violence in all its forms," his spokesman told a news conference in Deraa, according to the AFP news agency.

Meanwhile, the BBC's Lyse Doucet, who has been to the Syrian city of Homs, says there is constant shooting there, despite a ceasefire between government and opposition forces.

Our correspondent, who spent the night in Homs, also heard heavier weapons being fired.

She saw UN observers patrolling the city but said entire neighbourhoods were deserted.

In other developments, UN Middle East envoy Terje Roed-Larsen told the Security Council that arms were being smuggled in both directions between Lebanon and Syria.

"What we see across the region is a dance of death at the brink of the abyss of war," he told reporters later, AFP reported.

Violence was reported in several parts of the country on Wednesday, including the northern province of Idlib and the city of Hama.

Two members of the security forces were killed by gunmen in the eastern town of Deir al-Zour, according to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Also on Wednesday, Syrian troops fired across the border into Lebanon, killing an elderly woman and wounding her daughter, Lebanese officials said.

The UN estimates about 26,000 Syrians have fled across the border to Lebanon, most of them in the north.

On Tuesday, UN-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan told the Security Council that his peace plan could be the "last chance to avoid civil war" in Syria.

He told a closed session that the plan was "not an open-ended commitment" and highlighted continuing violations.

Mr Annan said he was particularly concerned that torture, mass arrests and other human rights violations were "intensifying".

He also told the council that President Assad bore "primary responsibility" for ending the military campaign.

The UN says at least 9,000 people have died since pro-democracy protests began in March 2011. In February, Syria's government put the death toll at 3,838 - 2,493 civilians and 1,345 security forces personnel.

Syria heavily restricts access to foreign journalists and the reports cannot be independently verified.

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32. [Attack, Syria] 70 Killed In Huge Damascus Explosions

Thursday, 10 May 2012

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57431432/syria-70-killed-in-huge-damascus-explosions/

Two strong explosions ripped through the Syrian capital Thursday, killing or wounding dozens of people and leaving scenes of carnage in the streets in an assault against a center of government power.

The blasts, which ripped the facade off a military intelligence building, happened at about 7:50 a.m. when employees are usually arriving at work. The outer wall of the headquarters collapsed, although the structure inside appeared intact.

CBS News' George Baghdadi says human remains and badly burned bodies littered the streets after the explosions, which also destroyed as many as 40 cars and pickup trucks. Syrian Ministry of Interior says 70 people were killed by the explosions, including 15 whose bodies were completely torn apart. Another 372 were wounded, including civilians and members of the military, the ministry added.

Baghdadi says the explosions appear to have targeted the so-called Palestine intelligence branch, and an aviation headquarters.

The Syrian government blamed "terrorists" and said dozens were killed or wounded, most of them civilians. The leading opposition group, however, the Syrian National Council, cast blame on the government itself, according to Al-Arabiya television. The opposition has previously accused the Assad regime of carrying out large bomb attacks targeting government workers and buildings.

The actual culpability in the previous attacks has remained impossible to verify independently, given the restrictions on foreign media in Syria.

"The explosions shook the house; it was frightening," Mohhamed Ali, a local resident, tells CBS News. "I saw tens of bodies burned and dozens of wounded, mostly from the security (services)" he added. "I live a few hundred meters (yards) away but I saw some fingers in my neighborhood. The blast was huge."

Baghdadi says ambulances and other emergency vehicles were still working among the carnage as heavy earthmoving equipment began to clear the rubble. A crater about a yard and a half across and two yards deep could be seen at the spot where one off the blasts went off.

Central Damascus is tightly under the control of forces loyal to President Bashar Assad but has been struck by several bomb attacks, often targeting security installations or convoys.



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33. [Special Interest, England] Bomb Scare At London Olympic Park

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnclarke/2012/05/06/video-bomb-scare-at-london-olympic-park/>

Despite the Olympic Summer Games' \$1.6 billion security budget, an Olympic Park worker still managed to sneak a fake bomb into the venue this weekend as it opened to the public for the first time.

According to The Sun, the Olympic Park worker contacted the paper "worried about gaping security loopholes at the East London site." The paper provided the worker a fake bomb which he then smuggled inside, apparently to prove a point.

The Sun reports:

It looks like a bomb, it's wired like a bomb and it has a timer like a bomb. But incredibly a worker carrying it in his digger was simply allowed to drive in unchallenged. Once inside the man openly took photos of the package next to apartments in the athletes' village, which will soon house up to 17,000 of the world's top competitors. During his 25-minute tour, he also took the "bomb" past the landmark velodrome and posed with it in front of the Olympic stadium.

The UK's Home Office responded to the security breach, saying, "LOCOG are responsible for the security of the Olympic Park. We have asked them to look into this incident and report back to the Home Secretary urgently."

The bill for security at the Olympics is \$1.6 billion and there are 23,700 guards. The Olympic Park is surrounded by an \$18 million electric fence stretching over 11 miles.



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34. [Security, Israel] Explosives Found In Jordan Valley Village

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/155585#.T6kj1FKRM14>

For the third time in recent weeks, IDF forces have discovered explosive devices in the northern Jordan Valley, reports the IDF Website. Early Tuesday morning, IDF forces conducted an operation in the Arab village of Tamun, near Bekaot. Based on intelligence information, the forces conducted searches during which five hidden explosive charges were found. The devices were neutralized in a controlled manner by sappers and three Arabs were detained and taken in for questioning by security forces.

Unlike other weaponry found in the area recently, the explosive devices uncovered were ready for immediate activation and were relatively large and complex. Previous devices found were smaller and more improvised, made from old deodorant containers and bottles.

The IDF's Jordan Valley Brigade has identified a trend in which hostile activity is spilling over from the Shechem region to the Jordan Valley region. IDF Website's Florit Shoihet wrote that the Jordan Valley Brigade is emphasizing that it will do whatever it takes to thwart this trend, due to the importance of creating a buffer between Judea and Samaria and the country of Jordan, with which Israel has a peace agreement.

Two weeks ago, four improvised explosive devices were discovered at the Bekaot Crossing. Two Arabs were arrested following the incident. A month ago, military police uncovered seven improvised explosive devices, three knives, and 50 bullets amongst a Palestinian's possessions.



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35. [Security, Israel] IDF Foils Third Terror Attack In Three Days

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/155518#.T6klr1KRM14>

A planned terror attack in Israel was thwarted on Sunday evening, for the third time in several days.

According to a report on Channel 2 News, Border Police officers arrested a 17-year-old Palestinian Authority Arab teen at a checkpoint near the Tapuach junction in Samaria. Upon inspection, the teen was found to be in possession of three pipe bombs. The teen was arrested and taken for questioning, while the explosive devices were detonated by sappers in a controlled explosion.

The latest foiled attack comes just several days after the IDF foiled two attempted terrorist attacks in Samaria, one of which was foiled in the same Tapuach junction.

On Thursday evening, Border Police officers arrested two terrorists in their 20s at the Tapuach junction. The terrorists were found to be carrying explosives and knives.

Sappers detonated the explosives, and no one was hurt. The two suspects were transferred to security authorities for further interrogation.

Later the same night, a third terrorist armed with a knife tried to infiltrate the community of Elon Moreh in Samaria.

The terrorist was caught by IDF soldiers after he managed to penetrate the security fence and began making his way into the community.

On April 24, two terrorists were nabbed as they were trying to smuggle explosives through a checkpoint in northern Samaria.

The two Palestinian Authority residents were arrested after soldiers manning the checkpoint discovered four pipe bombs.

The bombs were destroyed by sappers in a controlled explosion, and the men were taken in for questioning.

On April 11, IDF forces stopped a would-be terrorist bomber at a checkpoint east of Shechem in northern Samaria. The terrorist was carrying improvised explosive devices, three knives, and 50 bullets.

A Border Police bomb disposal unit was called in to dismantle the explosives.

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36. [Security, Ireland] Explosive Device Found In Tallaght

Saturday, 5 May 2012

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/breaking/2012/0505/breaking2.html>

An army bomb disposal team has made safe a suspicious device found underneath a car on a housing estate in Tallaght.

The device was discovered at about 3am on the Greenhills Drive estate.

The army bomb disposal team made the explosive device safe at the scene without a need for a controlled explosion.

The scene was declared safe at 5am.

The remains of the device have been handed over to gardai for a forensic examination.

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37. [Security, England] Explosive Device Found On Beach

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.bfbs.com/news/england/explosive-device-found-beach-57076.html>

An Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal team x-rayed the object and found it contained explosives.

The device was found on a beach near a holiday resort, coastguards said.

A member of the public raised the alarm yesterday afternoon after spotting something wedged into a metal sea defence on the beach at Hopton in Norfolk.

Coastguards from Lowestoft and Gorleston were sent to inspect the 17-inch device, which was covered in rust and sand near Potters Holiday Centre.



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38. [Attack, Ireland] Improvised Explosive Device Explodes Outside Limerick House

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://www.thejournal.ie/improvised-explosive-device-explodes-outside-limerick-house-444132-May2012/>

The Army bomb disposal team was called to deal with a number of viable Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Limerick and Kildare today.

Gardaí contacted the Defence Forces team after an IED exploded outside a house at Sean Heuston Place in Limerick city. The team arrived on the scene at 11.20am and carried out a search of the area.

No injuries have been reported and minor damage was caused to the front door of the house.

The scene was declared safe at 12.50pm.

A bomb disposal team was also called to a location on the Edenderry Road, about 1.5 miles outside Rathangan, Co Kildare.

The team arrived on the scene at 11.40am and made a number of viable IEDs safe without the need for a controlled explosion. The devices have been removed for further examination.

That scene was declared safe at 1pm.

Gardaí are investigating the separate incidents.

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39. [Security, Turkey] Explosives Seized Along Ministers' Route In Diyarbakır, Attack Averted

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-279550-explosives-seized-along-ministers-route-in-diyarbakir-attack-averted.html>

Police on Saturday seized 20 kilograms of explosives placed along a highway leading to Diyarbakır's Silvan district and believed to be targeting four ministers as their convoy passed by on Friday. The ministers were not in any danger as they had decided to travel to the district by plane in a last-minute decision.

Diyarbakır Governor Mustafa Toprak said in a statement on Sunday that Agriculture and Rural Affairs Minister Mehdi Eker, Development Minister Cevdet Yılmaz, Finance Minister Mehmet Şimşek and Forestry and Waterworks Minister Veysel Eroğlu attended the groundbreaking ceremony of the Silvan Dam on Friday. He said a plot by members of the terrorist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was foiled when the ministers changed their plans and traveled to the city by plane.

The governor said the explosives were safely disposed of on Saturday after intelligence suggested a terrorist attack had been planned. Noting that they think the explosives targeted the ministers, he said members of the PKK had earlier attacked the Silvan Dam's construction site and kidnapped three workers. "The earlier attack and the seizure of explosives planted on the day of the groundbreaking ceremony are regarded as futile efforts of the separatist organization to harm the unity, welfare and brotherhood of our people," he said. He added that the government will go ahead with its projects to boost welfare in the region despite these plans.

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40. [Security, Turkey] One Soldier Killed In Land Mine Explosion In East Of Turkey

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/135848/one-soldier-killed-in-land-mine-explosion-in-east-of-turkey.html>

One soldier was killed in a land mine blast in Alacik village of eastern Tunceli province.

Tunceli Governor Mustafa Taskesen told AA on Wednesday that a non-commissioned officer was killed when he stepped on a land mine during patrolling in the rural area in Alacik.

Taskesen said that security operations backed by helicopters were under way in the region.

On May 4, four soldiers had also been killed during a clash with PKK terrorists in Alacik.

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41. [Special Interest, Russia] Russia Says It Foiled Terrorist Attack Plot Against Site Of 2014 Winter Olympics

Thursday, 10 May 2012

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/russia-foiled-terrorist-attack-plot-site-2014-winter-olympics-article-1.1075663?localLinksEnabled=false>

Russian agents have foiled terror attack plans on the Black Sea resort of Sochi, host of the 2014 Winter Games, and seized a large amount of weapons and ammunition, authorities said Thursday.

Russia's secret service agency FSB discovered ten caches of arms and ammunition on May 4 and May 5 in Georgia's breakaway republic of Abkhazia, the country's National Anti-Terrorist Committee said. The region is very close to Sochi.

The arms seized included portable surface-to-air missiles, grenade launchers, flame throwers, grenades, rifles and explosives including TNT, it said.

The FSB said it suspects the attacks targeting Sochi were being masterminded by Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov, whom it alleges has close ties to Georgia's secret service. The secret service said Umarov coordinated the delivery of the weapons and ammunition to Abkhazia and arranged caches for them.

Umarov has previously claimed responsibility for the 2011 deadly bombing in a Moscow airport that killed 35 people.

Authorities said the terrorists were planning to smuggle the explosives and arms to Sochi "between 2012 and 2014 in order to use them during the preparations and during the games." They did not elaborate on how they came to that conclusion but maps were among the items found.

Sochi is less than dozen miles away from Russia's border with Abkhazia, a tiny region on the Black Sea that declared independence from Georgia in 2008. Few countries other than Russia have supported its independence.

Georgia and Russia, both former Soviet republics, had a brief but intense war in 2008 and are still very distrustful of each other.

However, Shota Khizanishvili, chief of staff at Georgia's Interior Ministry, denied any links between Georgia and Umarov.

"I can only say that the National Anti-Terrorist Committee is staffed with people with peculiar fantasies," Khizanishvili told The Associated Press. "They're always trying to accuse Georgia and its secret services of everything in any situation and without any grounds. This is a sign of a severe paranoia."

Sochi's selection as the host of the 2014 Winter Games had sparked fears of possible terrorist activity, although no attacks have occurred so far. The city is located in the same area as Russia's volatile North Caucasus region, which is plagued with near-daily violence linked to an Islamist insurgency that spread from Chechnya to neighboring areas in the late 1990s.

The International Olympic Committee would not comment on the specific case at Sochi but said in a statement that “security is a top priority for the IOC.

“Security at the games is the responsibility of the local authorities and we have no doubt that the Russians will be up to the task,” the statement said.

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42. [Security, India] Huge Quantity Of Explosives Seized; 16 Held

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/tamil-nadu/article3381098.ece>

Sixteen persons have been arrested and large quantity of explosives seized by the police in the southern districts in the last few days.

In a statement, Inspector General of Police (South Zone) Rajesh Das said that special teams were formed to check illegal possession and transactions of explosives and explosive substance as per the order of the Director General of Police.

Special teams formed under the Deputy Superintendents of Police started "Operation X-Ray" on April 23. Sixteen persons who violated the Explosives Act and rules were arrested. Six cases each were registered in Virudhunagar and Kanyakumari districts and five cases in Tirunelveli district. One case each was registered in Dindigul, Theni and Madurai districts.

Mr. Das said that the operation would continue in the southern districts.

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43. [Security, India] Explosives Seized At Pudukottai Checkpost

Sunday, 6 May 2012

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/article3389617.ece?textsize=large&test=1>

Police seized eight kg of explosive from a car at the check-post at Gandarvakottai near here on Saturday.

The explosive, comprising sulphur as a major element, was being taken from Karuppur near Tiruvaiyaru to Kottaiyur near Ilayankudi, for a temple festival.

By-poll measure

Police personnel at the special check-post set up as part of the measures ahead of the Pudukottai Assembly by-election to be held next month intercepted the vehicle and seized the explosive.

The Gandarvakottai police have registered a case and seized the car and the explosive.

Further investigation is on by the police.

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44. [Security, India] Explosives Seized, Two Held

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/247717/explosives-seized2-held.html>

The police arrested two persons and seized explosives stored illegally in a stone crusher unit at G Vaddarahatti in Kadur taluk.

According to police, the arrested have been identified as C H Venkatanarayana Reddy and Krishnappa.

The police have seized 19 bags of amonium nitrate and 3,750 electrical detonators.

The main accused Shanmukha Bovi has fled the spot. The raid was carried out under the direction of Tarikere DySP Sadananda Nayak.

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45. [Attack, Burma] More Gov't Troops Die In Road Bombings

Thursday, 10 May 2012

<http://www.mizzima.com/news/breaking-and-news-brief/7090-more-govt-troops-die-in-road-bombings-kia.html>

The road from Bhamo (Manmaw) to Loije in Kachin State continues to be the scene of major clashes between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and government troops, according to KIA officials.

On Monday, a series of bombs on the road killed up to 40 government soldiers, the KIA claimed. A similar attack on Sunday killed up to 30 soldiers, it said. The claims could not be verified.

KIA officials and local residents told the Kachin News Group that all civilian travel along the Bhamo to Loije road has been blocked since April by the KIA. The road to Loije is usually heavily traveled due to the town's importance as a major trading center with China.

Fighting between the Burmese army and the KIA has continued since the two sides met for peace talks at the Chinese border city of Ruili (Shweli) in early March. The talks ended without a cease-fire.

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46. [Attack, China] Woman Explodes Bomb Over Lost Home

Thursday, 10 May 2012

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/ipad/woman-explodes-bomb-over-lost-home/story-fn6ck55c-1226352519452>

A woman blew herself up yesterday to protest the demolition of her house in southwest China, killing two people and injuring 14. The woman, who also died on the spot, was at a local government office in Yunnan province negotiating compensation for the loss of her home when she detonated explosives attached to her body, state news agency Xinhua reported.

"We have opened an investigation. I can't tell you anything, but three people were killed and 14 were injured," said an official reached by telephone at the local government office, who refused to give his name.

"Of those (injured), four were badly hurt and are now on their way to hospital in Kunming," he added, referring to the capital of Yunnan.

A witness told Xinhua the woman blew herself up after she was asked to sign documents relating to compensation, and was killed immediately.

No further details about the dispute were immediately available, but government land grabs and forced relocations frequently trigger violent protests in China by desperate citizens who feel their rights are being trampled.

Last year, a suicide bomb attack by a jobless man angry over a land dispute left two civilians dead in the eastern city of Fuzhou.

Qian Mingqi, who was 52, lost his home in 1995 to make way for a highway, and then had a second home demolished in 2001 to make way for the same highway, according to reports published at the time.

"For the past 10 years, I have suffered a great injustice. I cannot find justice. I was forced to go down a road I didn't want to take," the bomber wrote on his microblog account.

"I will get justice myself, through concrete action."

Also last year, more than 40 people were injured when a disgruntled former employee set off a petrol bomb at a bank in the northwestern province of Gansu, in protest over being laid off.

And in September 2010, three people set themselves on fire in Fuzhou over a land dispute. One died.

Wronged Chinese queue up in Beijing or provincial capitals to petition authorities over injustices, but many complain of official unresponsiveness to their concerns.

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47. [Security, United States] Woman Flying To SFO Checks Luggage Containing Explosives

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2012/05/01/woman-flying-to-sfo-checks-luggage-containing-explosives/>

A New Jersey woman headed to San Francisco International Airport was briefly detained Tuesday after Transportation Security Administration screeners found explosive devices inside a suitcase she had checked for the flight, federal authorities told CBS San Francisco.

TSA explosives experts said the woman's luggage contained three small Claymore land mine casings, two of which were "packed with shrapnel."

According to the TSA, the woman told officials at Newark Liberty International Airport's Terminal C that she had packed the mines in her suitcase because she was going to be attending an explosives demonstration.

TSA and local police confiscated the weapons, but allowed the woman – identified only as a resident of Union, New Jersey – to travel on a later flight to San Francisco.

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48. [Security, United States] Delaware Restaurant Basement Hid Explosives, Weapons

Thursday, 3 May 2012

<http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/item/37887>

A routine fire inspection turns up hand grenades, 20,000 rounds of ammunition and 36 guns at Madeline's restaurant in Wilmington.

Fire inspectors reported some suspicious items in the basement at the restaurant at 6th and DuPont Streets during their inspection on Monday. Members of the Wilmington Police Explosive Ordinance team followed up on the fire department's findings and found numerous weapons, ammo and improvised explosive devices. The building was immediately evacuated.

Agents with the ATF and State Police joined Wilmington officers in safely removing the contents of the basement, which included two "fully functional" grenades, enough material to build more grenades, 36 firearms and more than 20,000 rounds of ammunition.

Wilmington Police have charged Stephen Sparco with possession of an incendiary device. According to the restaurant's website, Sparco is the grandson of the restaurant's founder and namesake, Madeline Sparco, who founded the Italian restaurant in 1961.

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49. [Trend, United States] Officials Investigate Suspicious Vehicle Fires, Explosive Device

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://www.wkrn.com/story/18161097/officials-investigate-suspicious-vehicle-fire>

Metro police are investigating after two vehicles were set on fire at an east Nashville residence early Monday morning.

A mother and her son told Nashville's News 2 they heard an explosion outside their home in the 2600 block of Colbert Drive off of Rosebank Avenue around 4 a.m.

"[My mother] just heard this explosion. Poof! Like that and she looked out the window and it was all fire in front of here," Kevin Reyes recalled.

Firefighters responded to the scene and found a full gas can and an explosive-like device in the front yard.

Officials told Nashville's News 2 the device was a beer bottle with three aerosol cans taped to it.

Investigators believed the bottle was filled with gasoline.

"I don't have any idea who did it," Reyes said.

Police called in the bomb squad to examine the device and notified the fire marshal to help with the investigation.

The fire marshal arrived on scene around 5:15 a.m.

Officials told Nashville's News 2 the vehicles appeared to have minor damage.

No one was injured.

Police shut down Colbert Drive for several hours during the investigation. The road has since reopened.

Authorities said whoever is responsible for the fires will face arson charges.

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50. [Security, United States] Joaquin Moraga Intermediate Student Brings Explosive Device To School

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://lamorinda.patch.com/articles/student-with-possible-pipe-bomb-detained-at-joaquin-moraga-intermediate>

Moraga police say a 13-year-old student brought a 4-inch long explosive device to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Friday and was discovered showing it to other students by school staff.

The device, described as like a pipe bomb in appearance, was taken to an office and Moraga police were called at 2:45 p.m. School hours had ended just minutes earlier. When police arrived, the device was inspected, the area secured, and the Walnut Creek Bomb Squad was called to respond, according to Moraga Police Chief Bob Priebe.

The Bomb Squad verified the contents of the device and qualified it as an explosive, Priebe said. The device was disassembled and removed from campus. Possession of the explosive device on school grounds is a felony and the student was detained by Moraga police after searching the student's residence for any additional devices. None were found, police said.

The 13 year-old was released to his parents and the case will be referred to the Contra Costa County DA for disposition, according to Priebe.

Superintendent Bruce Burns, waiting as Moraga police and ordnance disposal experts ribboned off the area where the device was found, said that it was discovered well after school ended at 2:44 p.m. and that no students were ever in danger.

Police bomb experts declined to characterize the exact component nature of the "device." They also declined to say if it was actually capable of detonating in any way.

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51. [Special Interest, United States] Detecting Suicide Bombers From A Safe Distance

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120504-detecting-suicide-bombers-from-a-safe-distance>

Suicide bombings have now spread to Syria; a Florida company produces equipment designed to aid in the detection of a suicide bomber at standoff distances, before a terrorist can reach his intended target. In a recent incident of a suspected suicide bomb plot, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) captured a Palestinian with two explosive devices near a West Bank roadblock. The bombs were detonated at a controlled destination, and the terror suspect is being held for questioning.

That incident comes following a deadly suicide bombing in Syria that claimed at least nine lives in Damascus. An Islamic group identifying itself as al-Nusra Front claimed responsibility, saying its operative detonated his explosive in the midst of 150 Syrian security forces.

“We are fortunate the IDF was able to apprehend the suspected West Bank terrorist before tragedy could occur,” said Richard Salem, CEO of Tampa, Florida-based threat detection maker Thermal Matrix International. “But as we have seen in Syria, not all potential threats are being discovered in time.”

Thermal Matrix produces equipment designed to aid in the detection of a suicide bomber at standoff distances, before a terrorist can reach his intended target. The company says the technology can detect plastic, liquid, powder, and gel explosives, which may not be seen when hidden beneath clothing, nor detected by metal detectors at entry check points. The company’s ACT Threat Detection System integrates with infrared sensors, aiding in concealed object threat detection through target identification, target tracking, and color analysis of potential PBIEDs (person-borne improvised explosive devices). The company notes that the system also displays and controls the imagery of multiple sensors, adding the ability to record, review, and archive scenes at a safe distance.

The two most recent suicide bomb incidents are not isolated. In the West Bank alone, two Palestinians with four pipe bombs were arrested one week ago. Earlier in April another terrorist was detained, found to be in possession of seven improvised explosive devices. Officials were quoted as saying they suspected the Palestinian planned to attack Israeli civilians or soldiers during Passover.

“The threat situations we have seen over the past couple days are exactly the types of situations our technology can help defuse,” Salem said. “We expect these attempts to continue until we can demonstrate to terrorists that we have advance warning technology capable of stopping them.”

The company also notes that although the system aids in detecting what is hidden beneath clothing, it is not an x-ray. This means there are no invasion of privacy concerns since the technology does not depict any anatomical features.

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52. [Security, Colombia] Army Avoids Terrorist Actions From The FARC

Friday, 4 May 2012

<http://www.army.mil.co/?idcategoria=325250>

In the last hours troops from the National Army achieved the location of nine explosive artifacts which were going to be used by the FARC to attack the civilian population in Meta and Norte de Santander.

The rapid action of the men from the 9th Mobile Brigade, allowed the register of the first four death traps in La Macarena, Meta, site were planted by the 'Felipe Rincón' group of the FARC.

Meanwhile in the municipality of Vista Hermosa, in the same department, soldiers from the 84th Terrestrial Combat Battalion 'Capitán Eduardo Figueroa' located and neutralized two mines and a mortar grenade from the 'Isaías Pardo' group of the FARC.

Finally, troops destroyed two 'camandula' type mines which were installed by guerrillas from the 'Ruiz Bari' group of the FARC; the death traps were made up of a kilo of explosive each and would be activated against the settlers of Teorama, Norte de Santander.

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53. [Attack, Colombia] 'FARC' Target Police And Vehicles In Seperate Road Attacks

Monday, 7 May 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/23893-farc-target-police-and-vehicles-in-seperate-road-attacks.html>

Two separate weekend road attacks from alleged FARC rebels have left police and civilians injured and caused damage to vehicles.

The most damaging attack came in northern Norte de Santander Department, where a bomb at a police checkpoint in the town of Ocaña left ten police officers and four civilians wounded, according to weekly Semana.

The bomb blast apparently also caused significant structural damage to nearby buildings and followed weeks of intimidating pamphlets appearing which threatened violence against residents and security forces.

Elsewhere, in central Meta Department, a Saturday attack on the highway linking the cities of Villavicencio and San Jose de Guaviare saw vehicles burned after their occupants had been forced out.

The number of vehicles involved was not confirmed, however reports indicate that the incident was carried out by just six guerrillas. Security forces were deployed to the area, but no engagement with rebel units was reported, according to the Latin American Herald Tribune.

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54. [Attack, Colombia] Three Soldiers Dead In 'FARC' Attack In Southwestern Colombia

Tuesday, 8 May 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/23929-3-soldiers-dead-3-wounded-in-southwest-colombia-.html>

Three soldiers were killed and another three injured Monday after stepping on landmines during an alleged FARC attack in southwestern Colombia, reported local media.

According to reports, security forces were carrying out an antinarcotics operation in the municipality of Argelia in the Cauca department, where the FARC had allegedly organized a shipment of cocaine to arrive, when the clash began.

Troops from the 29th Brigade stepped on a minefield while in pursuit of rebel forces from FARC's 30th and 60th Fronts, Secretary of Cauca Government Milena Edith Cabezas told local media.

Cabezas announced an urgent meeting with the military command and afterwards revealed plans to increase military presence in the zone from the Cauca department to the Pacific Ocean.

Argelia is considered a strategic location for drug traffickers in the region and has been the site of several reported FARC attacks this year.

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55. [Attack, Colombia] FARC Attack Colombia's National Police; Kills Two, Injures Three

Wednesday, 9 May 2012

<http://www.colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/23949-farc-attack-kills-2-injures-3.html>

An alleged FARC attack Tuesday night killed two and seriously injured three members of the National Police stationed in southwestern Colombia, reported Radio Santa Fe Wednesday.

The police were on duty at the Guabo monitoring station in the town of Mallama in Nariño department when they were attacked by the Mariscal Sucre column of the FARC's 29th Front.

The agents were protecting the road between the towns of Pasto and Tumaco. According to Mallama Mayor Francisco Melo Revelo, army units quickly arrived and restored security to the site early Wednesday morning.

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