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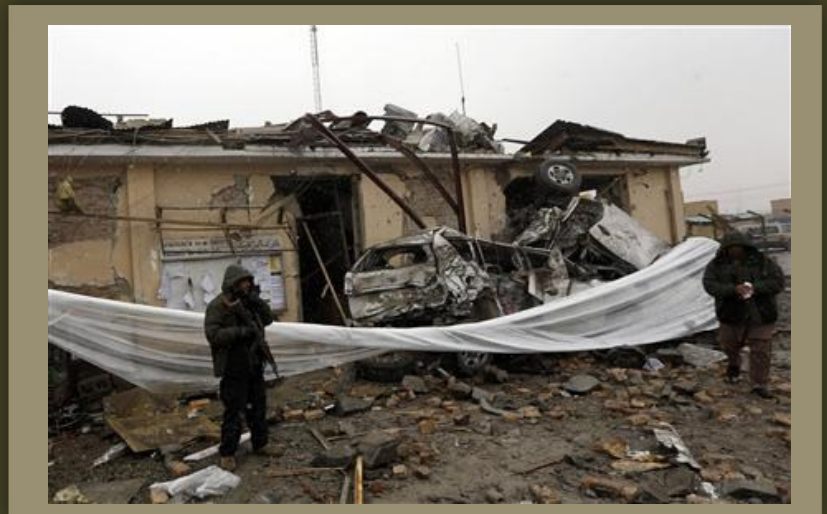
21 DECEMBER 2012

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-tolutions.com> using your government (.mil or .gov) email account.



Taliban Say Suicide Bomber Targeted U.S. Company In Kabul

The Taliban claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing which targeted a U.S. contracting company and killed two Afghan civilians, underscoring security issues ahead of a NATO pullout.



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AFPAK

1. [Attack, Pakistan] In Pakistan, Taliban Militants Attack Air Base With Grenades, Rockets

Saturday, December 15 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-pakistan-taliban-militants-attack-air-base-with-grenades-rockets/2012/12/15/482ed90c-46dd-11e2-8061-253bccfc7532_story.html

A rocket attack on the airport of this city in northwestern Pakistan, near the Afghan border, Saturday night left at least three civilians and five militants dead and wounded more than three dozen people, security officials said. The militants used rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons in the attack that lasted more than an hour, the officials said. Three rockets landed on airport premises and two in the neighboring civilian area.

Pakistani Taliban, also known as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, claimed responsibility for the attack.

“Peshawar air base was our target,” Ehsanullah Ehsan, spokesman for the group, said in a statement. He said 10 attackers took part in the operation.

A spokesman for the Pakistani air force said the attackers’ target was the military base attached to the Bacha Khan International Airport. Helicopter gunships, used for security operations in the nearby lawless tribal areas, are based there.

The air force spokesman said security troops repulsed the attack, and the attackers could not enter the base and airport premises. None of the rockets landed inside the main airport area, a spokesman for the Civil Aviation Authority told the Associated Press. No planes were damaged and no air force or airport officials were hurt in the attack.

An official at the Khyber Teaching Hospital said four civilians were killed and nearly 40 injured, but rescue officials confirmed three dead and 31 wounded. The dead and wounded were residents of neighborhoods near the airport. Mian Iftikhar Hussain, the information minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where Peshawar is the capital, said five of the attackers were killed, including four in a car targeted by security forces after the rocket attack.

Hussain told the AP that two of the rockets damaged a wall that surrounds the airport, and a third landed near a government building outside the premises. Two other rockets landed in a nearby residential neighborhood.

A gun battle broke out between security forces and militants after the rocket attack, he said.

Security and civil aviation officials said the Pakistani military has taken control of the airport and flights have been diverted to other airports.

Hussain said all roads leading to the airport have been blocked and the neighboring areas are being searched. He said there were intelligence reports of the attack, and a suicide bomber was also arrested at the airport area a few days ago.

Pakistani Defense Minister Naveed Qamar said in a statement that some suspected terrorists were reported to have taken shelter in a house near the airport.





AFPAK

2. [Attack, Pakistan] Five More Attackers Killed As Peshawar Airport Cleared

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-19521-Five-more-attackers-killed-as-Peshawar-airport-cleared>

Security forces on Sunday killed five more militants – said to be Uzbeks – in a fierce gunbattle in Pawaki village, just one kilometre from the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) airbase in Peshawar, clearing the area off miscreants after the Saturday night's attack on the Bacha Khan International Airport and PAF base. The airport was cleared 16 hours after the assault.

A police commando, Sareer Khan, was also killed and two other cops wounded during the six-hour-long gunbattle between the militants and police supported by soldiers of the Pakistan Army. The militants had taken shelter inside an under-construction house in Pawaki after the botched attack on the PAF airbase. There were reports that two policemen were killed in the incident that shocked the people of Peshawar.

The commandos of the Peshawar Police and Elite Force as well as soldiers of the Pakistan Army launched the operation on Sunday morning after receiving reports that some militants who had attacked the airport and the adjacent airbase on Saturday night were hiding in a building in Pawaki village.

“Two attackers blew themselves up while the other three were gunned down inside the house. These were the people who had attacked the airport last night,” Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Imtiaz Altaf told reporters. The CCPO said the police had been tipped off about the presence of the militants inside the building when the cops were conducting a search operation after the Saturday night attack.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Senior Minister Bashir Ahmad Bilour said the police could not cordon off the entire Peshawar and this was the reason that the attackers managed to hide in the house in Pawaki. “The police did a great job by taking out all the attackers before they could reach their target,” he maintained.

All the militants killed on Sunday were said to be wearing suicide jackets and four seemed to be non-locals. Some sources suspected four of the attackers to be Uzbeks. A tattoo was also inscribed on the body of one of the slain militants, a source said, adding that it might be the emblem of a militant organisation. The presence of Uzbeks affiliated to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in the two Waziristans under the protection of local militants has been confirmed in the past.

The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it had sent 10 attackers to accomplish the mission. The TTP spokesman Ihsanullah Ihsan called different media organisations to announce that their target was the PAF installations at the airbase.

Pawaki remained tense and was mourning the deaths and injuries to a number of villagers who became victim of the attack late Saturday night. The residents remained stranded for several hours when the security forces sealed off the area on Saturday morning. Women and children were crying amid intense firing and explosions in Pawaki, sited around one kilometre west of the airbase.

The owner of the under-construction house in Pawaki and his nephew told reporters that labourers arriving for work saw the heavily armed militants hiding in the house at around 7am in the morning. They said the militants told the labourers to arrange shawls and a vehicle for them as they apparently wanted to escape from there. The



labourers were reportedly warned not to inform the police about their presence. They complained that the police arrived one-and-a-half hours after the militants were first found out hiding in the house.

An official said the operation started at around 9am and continued till 2pm when police commandos entered the house by ramming an armoured personnel carrier (APC) into the main gate of the building.

As the cops entered the house, two militants wearing suicide jackets blew themselves up while another three were shot dead. The area was later cleared. Several live bombs and hand-grenades recovered from the area were later defused.

The in-charge of the bomb disposal unit, Shafqat Malik, said they had recovered six suicide jackets that were defused. He said the unit also defused a number of live hand-grenades, improvised explosive devices, rockets and other ammunition recovered from the spot.

The police contingents, however, continued patrolling the streets after the operation and an APC was also deployed in the village to deal with any emergency situation.

In the biggest attack so far on the Peshawar Airport by the militants, five attackers were killed during an exchange of fire with security forces on Saturday night while the other five managed to escape.

Officials said that 10 militants armed with suicide jackets, two explosive-laden vehicles, hand-grenades, rocket launchers and automatic weapons stormed the airbase at around 8:15pm and tried to enter the airport building on Saturday night.

A source said the militants rammed two explosive-laden vehicles into the boundary wall of the airbase, one of which exploded with a huge blast while the other did not explode. The blast damaged the boundary wall and destroyed a nearby house.

“The airbase and airport were attacked from the Pawaki and Abdarra side at three different places. On two sides, the militants rammed explosive-filled cars, one of which did not go off while at the third place they were planting an anti-tank mine when security personnel got alerted and opened fire,” an official said.

District Coordination Officer (DCO) Javed Marwat on Saturday confirmed the death of five people and injuries to 46 others on Saturday night. As the operation continued, all the flights coming to the Bacha Khan International Airport were diverted to Islamabad.

The airport was opened for flights on Sunday afternoon when the first flight of the Pakistan International Airlines took off for Karachi. A source said 22 flights were suspended since the Saturday attack.

The Inter-Services Public Relations said all the PAF installations and assets and the Bacha Khan International Airport remained safe in the attack.

APP adds: Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafique Butt visited the Peshawar airbase that was attacked by terrorists on Saturday night, according to a PAF press release.

Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Arif, Air Officer Commanding, Northern Air Command, and Air Commodore Khawar Hussain, Base Commander, Peshawar, briefed the air chief about the salient features of the anti-terrorist operation conducted by security forces.



Synergetic effects achieved through a joint operation by the PAF, Pak Army and civil police were also highlighted.

The air chief, while interacting with officers and security personnel, who jointly conducted the operation, commended their courage, valour and spirit to defend the vital national assets.

The air chief also lauded the timely and efficient response of commanders and troops of the PAF base that successfully thwarted a major terrorist attack. He especially appreciated the high motivation level of deployed PAF and Pak Army security forces and their resolve to defend the national assets at any cost.

Air Marshal Muhammad Hasan, Deputy Chief of Air Staff (Administration), accompanied the air chief during the visit. Meanwhile, a spokesman of the PAF said that the Peshawar airbase, which was attacked by terrorists on Saturday night, was in total control and normal operations had resumed.



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3. [Attack, Pakistan] Pakistan Market Blast 'Kills 17'

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/15662139/bomb-attack-kills-16-at-pakistan-market/>

A car bomb killed 17 people including women and children and wounded dozens more when it exploded near a bus queue at a market in northwest Pakistan Monday, officials said.

The bomb went off in the town of Jamrud, killing or wounding people waiting for buses to take them across the northwest and to other parts of the country, according to officials.

Pools of blood and charred flesh littered the roadside, along with at least 20 burnt vehicles, said an AFP reporter. Clothes, school books, children's shoes and burqas lay everywhere.

Jamrud is in Khyber district, which is part of Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal belt on the Afghan border. The Taliban and other Al-Qaeda-linked groups, who stage attacks in both countries, have strongholds in the zone.

A district administration office was around 100 metres from where the bomb was detonated but was not damaged in the attack, according to an AFP reporter.

"Seventeen people were killed in the blast. Fourteen bodies were brought to our hospital while three people succumbed to their wounds on their way to Hayatabad Medical Complex in Peshawar," said Doctor Sameen Jan Shinwari at the Agency Headquarters hospital in Jamrud.

"Four women were among those killed in the blast and they were all Afghans. These women were coming from the border in a hired car, which was completely destroyed. These women's Afghan passports were found in a bag," said Shinwari.

He said a five-year-old Afghan girl accompanying the women and two six-year-old Pakistani boys were also among those killed.

Khyber's top administrative official, Mutahir Zeb, played down the idea that the government office was the intended target, but said authorities were still investigating.

"We are still are ascertaining what procedure exactly was used to blow up the vehicle," he said.

Two intelligence officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the explosives had been packed into a Suzuki Alto vehicle.

Driver Taj Muhammad, 40, said he was entering Jamrud when he heard the explosion and saw a ball of fire.

"I rushed to the site and saw people engulfed by flames. There were pieces of human flesh and blood everywhere. I saw a little child who was injured and crying. I took this boy to hospital," he told AFP.

"When I picked up the injured boy he looked like my son and I was really so sad."



Pakistan suffers frequent bomb and suicide attacks blamed on Islamist militant groups. Its troops have for years been fighting homegrown armed groups in the tribal belt.

On Saturday a suicide squad of five targeted the airport in Peshawar, the main northwestern city close to Jamrud, killing five civilians and blowing a hole in the perimeter wall.

The assault, claimed by the Pakistani Taliban, sparked prolonged gunfire and forced authorities to close the airport, a commercial hub and air force base on the edge of the tribal belt.

It was the second Islamist militant attack in four months on a military air base in nuclear-armed Pakistan.

On Sunday a policeman and five militants were killed following gunbattles between security forces and militants suspected of having been involved in the airport attack, security officials said.

The government says more than 35,000 people have died due to terrorism in the country since the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

There has, however, been a decline in the number and severity of attacks since 2009, when the Pakistan army fought major operations against local Taliban in the northwestern district of Swat and the tribal district of South Waziristan.

According to an AFP tally there have been more than 100 bombings, killing 550 people, so far this year, compared to 203 in 2009 when the death toll was tallied at 1,840.





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4. [Attack, Pakistan] Car Bomb Kills 17 In Pakistani Tribal Region

Monday, December 17 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/18/world/asia/car-bomb-wreaks-carnage-in-pakistan-tribal-region.html?_r=1&

A powerful car bomb exploded near government offices in a town in the northwestern tribal belt on Monday, killing at least 17 people and wounding dozens, local officials said.

The car bomb attack, in the Khyber tribal agency, followed a Taliban assault on the nearby international airport in Peshawar over the weekend that left at least 15 people dead, 10 of them militants, underlining the continued potency of Islamist fighters in the area.

In Monday's attack, officials said that a vehicle loaded with an estimated 90 pounds of explosives was detonated by remote control in Jamrud, close to Peshawar, which borders the tribal belt.

Although the blast occurred near the offices of a senior government official, its immediate force ripped through the women's waiting area of a bus stop, said Jahangir Azim, a senior official in the Khyber agency. The dead included four Afghan women and three children, he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, which damaged shops and vehicles across a wide radius. The dead and an estimated 44 wounded people were taken to hospitals.

Khyber is home to several Islamist militant groups, some of which are affiliated with the Pakistani Taliban, while others are fighting both the Taliban and the government.

Officials said they were unsure whether Monday's attack was aimed at the government offices or at members of the Zakakhel subtribe, which has recently sided with the government against the Taliban. One bus stop in the vicinity of the blast is used by the Zakakhel to travel to their home area of Tirah Valley, which has recently seen fighting between members of a government-sponsored tribal militia and two rival Islamist groups.

"At the moment we are not in position to allege someone for the blast or to tell exactly what was the motive behind the attack by the perpetrators," Asmatullah Wazir, a local government official, said by telephone.

In the Taliban attack against the Peshawar airport, five militants died during a failed attempt to break through the airport's perimeter wall on Saturday night, while another five died during a shootout with security forces at a nearby house on Sunday morning.

At least five other people, including three civilians and two police officers, died in the attack, which was the first concerted attack on the Peshawar airport. Although the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, officials identified several of the attackers as Uzbeks, suggesting that elements linked to Al Qaeda had also participated.

Together, the two attacks killed at least 32 people and wounded more than 80, highlighting the challenges facing the security forces in the run-up to general elections that are due in the next six months.





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5. [Attack, Afghanistan] Blast Kills Ten Afghan Girls Collecting Firewood

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-afghanistan-blast-girls-idUSBRE8BG08U20121217>

A blast killed 10 Afghan girls as they were collecting firewood in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, government officials said.

It was not immediately clear what caused the explosion in volatile Nangarhar province. It could have been a bomb planted by Taliban insurgents or a landmine left over from decades of conflict.

The girls, between nine and 11 years old, were collecting wood in remote Chaparhar district, near the porous border with Pakistan, which is infested with some of the world's most dangerous militant groups.

"Unfortunately, 10 little girls were killed and two others wounded but we don't know whether it was planted by the Taliban," said Ahmadzia Abdulzai, provincial government spokesman.

Women and children are often the victims of the war between the Taliban and U.S.-led NATO and Afghan forces, now in its eleventh year.

Many Afghans are growing increasingly worried that the nation could face another civil war or a major Taliban push to seize power again when most NATO combat troops withdraw by the end of 2014.



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6. [Attack, Afghanistan] Taliban Say Suicide Bomber Targeted U.S. Company In Kabul

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSBRE8BG07E20121217>

Afghanistan's Taliban movement claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Kabul on Monday which targeted a U.S. contracting company and killed two Afghan civilians, underscoring security challenges ahead of a NATO pullout.

Hours earlier, a blast in eastern Afghanistan killed 10 Afghan girls, between nine and 11 years old, as they collected firewood.

The Taliban and its allies have staged high-profile attacks in Kabul over the past few years against Western targets, including embassies. Attacks on Western companies are rare.

"A suicide car bomber attacked an important American company which is involved in security," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement.

"The company was under our surveillance for a long time and today we succeeded."

After more than a decade of war against Western forces with superior firepower and technology, the Taliban remain a potent force capable of striking in the heart of Kabul.

Many Afghans fear the Taliban, who were toppled by U.S.-backed Afghan forces in 2001, will push to seize power again after most NATO combat troops leave by the end of 2014. They also worry another civil war could erupt.

The Afghan government says the Taliban have no chance of taking over and that police and troops can take control once Western forces pull out.

An Interior Ministry spokesman said two Afghan civilians were killed in the Kabul attack and that the 15 wounded included two foreigners.

The Virginia-based company that was targeted, Contract International Inc., has built fuel storage systems in military bases in Afghanistan.

EXPANDING REACH

After the blast, Western men clutching weapons walked outside the company compound as ambulances sped by. A NATO soldier walked by parts of a building that was torn apart by the blast, which left a large crater. A brick wall collapsed.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said the blast occurred near Camp Phoenix, a U.S. military base where Afghan soldiers are trained.

"The attack did not seem to be directed at ISAF forces," said Lieutenant-Colonel Les Carroll, an ISAF spokesman.



Kabul Police Chief General Ayoub Salangi said explosives were planted in a small truck.

The Taliban have expanded their reach beyond their strongholds in southern and eastern Afghanistan to some areas in the north which were relatively peaceful for years.

It was not immediately clear what killed the girls who were collecting wood in volatile Nangarhar province in the east. It could have been a bomb planted by insurgents or, for instance, a landmine left over from decades of conflict.

One official in the area said they were apparently killed by a rocket warhead which exploded while they dug it up from the ground out of curiosity.

"Unfortunately, 10 little girls were killed and two others wounded," said Ahmadzia Abdulzai, the provincial government spokesman.





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7. [Attack, Pakistan] Grenade Attack At Nowshera Army Facility Wounds Ten

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://dawn.com/2012/12/18/grenade-attack-in-nowshera-injures-seven/>

Two men on a motorcycle hurled hand grenades at the main gate of an army recruiting center in northwestern Pakistan on Tuesday, wounding 10 people, police said.

The injured in the attack in the garrison town of Risalpur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province included civilians and security personnel, said senior police official, Ghulam Mohammed.

Mohammed said the police have launched a manhunt to trace and arrest the attackers.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, the latest in a string of assaults in recent days that illustrate the continued challenge Pakistan faces from militants despite military operations against the Pakistani Taliban and their supporters.

Tuesday's attack came a day after a car bomb exploded in a crowded market in Pakistan's northwestern town of Jamrud near the Afghan border, killing 17 people and wounding more than 40 others.

Earlier on Saturday, ten Taliban fighters armed with rockets and car bombs attacked the military section of an international airport in Peshawar, killing four people and wounding over 40 others.

Five of the militants were killed during the attack and the other five died Sunday after hours-long shootout with security forces.



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8. [Trend, Pakistan] Four Years, Four High-Profile Attacks

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://dawn.com/2012/12/18/four-years-four-high-profile-attacks/>

“This was a sequel to Saturday night’s attack on the PAF base,” an official said, while referring to the attack on Peshawar’s Bacha Khan International Airport and the PAF base. Over the last four years, there have already been three prequels to this attack and then a Sunday morning sequel.

According to a report detailing the most recent attack, “A security official said bags seized from the van blown up on Saturday contained dates and bottled water, indicating that the militants wanted to occupy the airbase. He said seven bombs in steel containers had also been found. It appeared that the first group was tasked with breaching the western perimeter of the base and engaging security personnel so that a second batch could go in, lay bombs and occupy buildings. Logistics indicate that they had come well prepared to occupy the airbase.”

Why aren’t questions being asked about how the attackers organised their own logistics so thoroughly without interference from authorities? How is it that they came in such close vicinity of a high-profile area in a suspicious looking vehicle in the first place?

Referring to suicide jackets, the bomb disposal chief was quoted as saying, “The six suicide jackets defused after the abortive airbase attack and in Pawaka were not home-made crude suicide vests that we are familiar with. These appeared to be machine-made. They were a work of craftsmanship. This is the first time I have seen such sophisticated jackets.”

The jackets had steel ball-bearings and compressed high-intensity explosives in order to cause more destruction. Where are such ‘sophisticated’ jackets being sourced from and how come no authority has yet taken notice of where they are being made or brought in from? Is this not a cause of alarm that such destructive material is being transported from various unknown areas while innocent citizens are daily being harassed by the police and rangers while traveling within cities, being searched thoroughly just for fitting the profile of a 15-45 year old male?

Lastly, to quote questions from a recently published editorial, “Every new high-profile attack is a reminder of how little is known publicly about the investigations into previous such attacks. Was physical security as rigorous as it could be? Was the vetting of security personnel posted at these installations thorough? Were maps and schematics and other information protected adequately? And after weaknesses were exposed, how effective was the response of the security apparatus to ensure a repeat would be difficult? Clearly, as the attack on a foreign airbase in southern Afghanistan proved, the militants can exploit weaknesses in defences in even the most hostile environment. But in the absence of transparent and public investigations and accountability, we can’t be certain that negligence, incompetence or complicity in the security apparatus here is being identified and punished as thoroughly as it should.”



AFPAK

9. [Attack, Afghanistan] Bomb Attack Of Taliban Failed On A Mosque In Helmand

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/security/item/5480-bomb-attack-of-taliban-failed-on-a-mosque-in-helmand.html>

The military officials of Helmand prevented from 2 explosions in a mosque in that province.

According to reports, armed Taliban with planting of 2 bombs in a mosque in Abdullah Jan area wanted to target prayers.

Officials of Maiwand army crops said to BNA, the security personnel with cooperation of residents of the area discovered and neutralized the bombs.

It is said that one of the bombs was placed near a mosque where several volumes of Holly Quran and other religious books keep and the second bomb was placed near the gate of this mosque.

Local officials called armed Taliban responsible of planting bombs and said that assessment has been started for arresting the culprits of this case.



AFPAK

10. [Security, Pakistan] BDS Defuses Bomb Planted At Cinema

Tuesday, December 18 2012

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012\12\18\story_18-12-2012_pg7_9

The city police foiled a terrorist attack designed to blow up a cinema near Bacha Khan Chowk and defused a bomb there, police said on Monday. The police and Bomb Disposal Squad in a joint operation foiled the terror attempt to blow up Shama cinema near Bacha Khan Chowk and defused two-kilogramme bomb. Police informed BDU staff following information about presence of suspicious stuff placed close to Shama Cinema on Pajaggi Road on late Sunday night. The residents of Peshawar have appreciated the prompt response of the officials concerned.



AFPAK

11. [Attack, Afghanistan] Seven Killed As Bomb Hits Police Vehicle In SW Afghanistan

Thursday, December 20 2012

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-12/20/c_132053855.htm

Five civilians and two policemen were killed Thursday afternoon when a bomb hit a police mobile in Zaranj, the provincial capital of southwestern Afghan Nimroz province, police said.

"A police unit was on routine patrol in police district 3 of Zaranj city at about 3:30 p.m. (local time) when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was detonated through a remote control device, killing two policemen and five civilians near the scene," police chief of the district Abdul Haq told Xinhua.

He said two policemen were also wounded in the attack and the police mobile was destroyed in the incident in the province 790 km southwest of Kabul.

The police have rolled out a search operation to find the people behind the attack, the police official added.

No group claimed responsibility for the attacks, but Taliban suspects routinely claim responsibility for such attacks.

The insurgent group, who ruled the country before they were ousted by a U.S.-led invasion in late 2001, renewed armed insurgency, staging ambush and suicide attacks, killing combatants as well as civilians.



AFPAK

12. [Attack, Pakistan] CD Shops Blown Up In Charsadda

Thursday, December 20 2012

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-80376-CD-shops-blown-up-in-Charsadda->

Militants blew up two compact disc (CD) shops in Charsadda while a blast occurred outside a house in Khyber Agency, Geo News reported Thursday.

According to police, unknown miscreants had planted explosives outside two CD shops in Sardheri Bazaar in Charsadda that went off and destroyed the shops. No loss of life was reported in the incident. The police reached the spot and collected pieces of evidence from the rubble.

On the other hand, explosives planted outside a house in Jamrud area of Khyber Agency caused a blast. The house was partially damaged but the residents remained safe in the explosion, sources told.



AFPAK

13. [Attack, Pakistan] Taliban Commander Killed In Pak Blast

Friday, December 21 2012

<http://english.samaylive.com/world-news/676520619/taliban-commander-killed-pak-blast.html>

A top Taliban commander was among five people killed in a powerful blast in a market in Pakistan's restive South Waziristan tribal region.

The bomb attack, which also left six people injured, targeted militant commander Maulvi Abbas Wazir who had close links with foreign fighters and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, officials were quoted as saying by local media.

There was confusion about the nature of the explosion.

Some reports said the attack had involved an improvised explosive device while Geo News channel reported it was carried out by a suicide bomber.

State-run Radio Pakistan reported that five persons were killed and six others injured.

The blast occurred in a vegetable market in Wana, the main town of South Waziristan tribal agency.

The army had carried out a massive operation in the region in 2009 but militants continue to be active in the area.

The powerful explosion damaged several shops in the market.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

Maulvi Abbas Wazir was a confidant of Taliban commander Nek Muhammad, who was killed in a US drone strike in 2004.

They were both known for sheltering Uzbek, Tajik and other foreign militants.

Maulvi Abbas left South Waziristan after Maulvi Nazir emerged as the top warlord in the region and launched a campaign against foreign militants.

Abbas returned to the region last year after finalising a deal with Nazir, who is considered a "pro-government" commander.



AFRICOM

14. [Security, South Africa] South Africa Police Foil ANC Meeting Bomb Plot

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-safrica-anc-plot-idUSBRE8BG08420121217>

South African police said on Monday they had foiled a plot by suspected right-wing Afrikaner extremists targeting an African National Congress (ANC) conference attended by President Jacob Zuma and dozens of top government officials.

Four men aged between 40 and 50 were arrested on Sunday. A police spokesman said there was evidence they were planning acts around the country and not just at the ANC meeting in the central city of Bloemfontein.

The vast majority of South Africa's whites accepted the ANC's victory in the 1994 election that brought Nelson Mandela to power and ended decades of white-minority rule. However, a tiny handful continues to oppose the historic settlement.

"Their acts are widespread. We arrested them in different provinces," spokesman Billy Jones told Reuters.

ANC spokesman Keith Khoza said preliminary information suggested the men were planning to bomb the marquee where Zuma and 4,500 delegates are holding a five-day meeting to choose the ANC's leadership for the next five years.

"This would have been an act of terrorism that South Africa can ill afford," Khoza said.

The Federal Freedom Party (FFP), a fringe group fighting for self-determination for the white Afrikaner minority, confirmed two of those arrested were FFP members but denied any role in the suspected plot.

"We were not involved and do not associate ourselves with their actions," FFP national secretary Francois Cloete told Reuters.

In July, a former university lecturer was found guilty of orchestrating a 2002 plot to overthrow the ANC and assassinate Mandela - now 94 and receiving treatment in a Pretoria hospital for a lung infection.

There was a heavy security presence at the Bloemfontein meeting and the few vehicles being allowed onto the university campus hosting the event were being searched by police and sniffer dogs.

ZUMA AND CYRIL

The conference is set to give Zuma a second mandate to lead the party and - given the ANC's dominance at the ballot box - another five-year term in 2014 as president of Africa's biggest economy.

Nominations for top party positions take place on Monday, with former union leader Cyril Ramaphosa, now South Africa's second-richest black businessman, well-placed to return to politics as Zuma's deputy.

Sources close to Ramaphosa, who has been out of front-line politics for the last decade, were confident he would win the vote for the ANC deputy president. Results of the internal election are expected on Tuesday.



"The numbers are in our favor and we are going for it," said one ANC official backing Ramaphosa. "It's almost a done deal. Cyril is going to be our next deputy president."

The ascension of Ramaphosa to a top ANC position is likely to be seen as a pro-business move by a party still deeply rooted in socialism, and may help assuage the fears of the ratings agencies that have recently downgraded South Africa.

Zuma's administration has been criticized for failing to overhaul a rigid labor market or fix a broken education system that is eroding the long-term competitiveness of Africa's biggest economy.

There are also concerns the ANC might push for new taxes for mining firms to help the government finance welfare spending for the millions of blacks who have seen few economic gains since the end of apartheid.

However, Deputy Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene said the government would not be "reckless" in implementing new taxes. He also accused the ratings agencies of political meddling.

"There has actually been some level of unfairness because if you look at what was coming out of the ratings agencies, it was somewhat of an attempt to influence the outcome of the conference," he told a business forum on the sidelines of the ANC meeting.



AFRICOM

15. [Attack, Kenya] Grenades Injure One In Nairobi's "Little Mogadishu"

Sunday, December 16 2012

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/12/16/uk-kenya-explosion-idUKBRE8BF0EJ20121216>

One person was injured in an grenade attack on Sunday in the Eastleigh district of the Kenyan capital Nairobi, a neighbourhood that has suffered a series of similar attacks in recent months, the local Red Cross society said. Eastleigh is commonly dubbed "Little Mogadishu" because of its large Somali population. Sites in other towns including Mombasa and Garissa have also been attacked with guns and grenades since Kenya sent its troops into neighbouring Somalia to fight Islamist al Shabaab rebels in October last year.

The Kenya Red Cross said three grenades had been thrown from a speeding vehicle, and that one person had been rushed to hospital.

A Reuters reporter at the scene said the grenade had hit a butcher's shop next to a guest house, blowing a hole in the wall and shattering windows, and that the injured person had been a customer at the shop.

The police were not available immediately for comment.



AFRICOM

16. [Law Enforcement, Kenya] Kenyan Police Step Up Security In Mombasa After Arresting Al-Shabaab Suspects

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.nzweek.com/world/kenyan-police-step-up-security-in-mombasa-after-arresting-al-shabaab-suspects-38093/>

Kenyan police beefed up security in the coastal city of Mombasa and its environs on Sunday after four terror suspects were arrested for planning an imminent terrorist attack.

Regional deputy police commander Robert Kitur said the four are trained Al-Shabaab members who had sneaked into the country from Somalia.

“The four suspects, Adoti Wanjohi Waiganjo, Hamadi Ali, Oril Simiyu and Maingi are on terror radar by both local and international security agencies” Kitur said on Sunday.

Mombasa, the country’s second largest city and a major tourist spot is one of various cities targeted by a series of grenade attacks and abduction of foreigners in recent months.

The East African nation’s coastal towns are the backbone of the country’s thriving tourism industry, which has been hit by the fear of terror attacks and the kidnapping of foreigners by Somali pirates from resorts near the border with Somalia.

The authorities have particularly warned against the laxity in the screening of cars for explosives at all shopping malls and any business or social gatherings with at least 10 people at any given moment that these might be vulnerable to attacks.

According to intelligence sources, Hamadi Ali, a de factor leader of Al-Shabaab in Kenya, is the most sought target by security agencies for many years.

Kitur said the detectives had information that the four were part of a wide terrorism network planning attacks in Kenya’s second city of Mombasa.

“Our officers are operating on highly placed intelligence reports of impending terror attacks in Mombasa and we have arrested suspects”, said Kitur. The officers recovered a Ceska pistol from the suspects.

Police and intelligence sources reveal that Hamadi who operates recruitment in Nairobi City and Coastal city of Mombasa received paramilitary trainings on terrorism including bomb making and was extensively involved in fighting for Al-Shabaab.

Detectives have mainly concentrated on Hamadi who has a scar in his face and a bullet wound on his left leg, he sustained while fighting for Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

“He is a Muslim convert from Central province but lives in Nairobi City, went to Somalia in 2006 alongside the son of late Muslim cleric Aboud Rogo where they underwent paramilitary training,” said a senior police officer on anonymity.



Police believe they have bombs, mainly grenades, ready for detonations that are hidden in a house in Kisauni area.

The four are being held at the port city police station after being grilled for several hours by anti-terrorism police officers at CID headquarters.

Kenya's tourism has suffered a decline in tourist arrivals since September 2011, when the Somali militant group Al-Shabaab carried out the kidnappings of tourists in the Lamu archipelago and Spanish volunteers.

The port city, the capital Nairobi and other parts of Kenya have suffered a series of grenade attacks since Kenya sent troops into Somalia in mid-October 2011 to try to pursue Al-Shabaab insurgents it blames for a surge in violence and kidnappings threatening tourism.

Those privy to Friday's arrest said the four suspects have confessed contacts with Rogo's son, 17-year-old Khubeib About Rogo.

Khubeib, an explosive expert, was arrested last month with other six youths and charged of planning to attack two police stations in Mombasa.

He was jointly charged with Swaleh Abdulmajit, Swaleh Ali alias Ronaldo, Bilal Gaitho, Juma Musa alias Chidi, Hashim Yassir and Mzee Suleiman.

Head of the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) Boniface Mwaniki said the hunt for the Al-Shabaab recruits is yielding fruits following successful arrests in Garissa and Mombasa.

Also being sought is Faud Abubakar Manswab, with intelligence implicating him and others of planning to carry out several terror attacks in Mombasa.

"We have intelligence reports in respect to terrorist threats from Al-Shabaab and their sympathizers since Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) entered Kismayu," Mwaniki told Xinhua on phone.

The authorities have pledged to minimize, if not eliminate terrorism and other forms of criminal activities threatening the country's security.



AFRICOM

17. [Attack, Somalia] Deadly Explosion In Baledweyne

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.mustaqbalradio.com/deadly-explosion-in-baledweyne/>

The reports coming from Baledweyn city of Hiiraan region confirms that there was a deadly explosion in that city. Mustaqbal radio's reporter from Baledweyn Ibraahim Mohamed Ghedi said that the explosion was targeted with some of local government officials who were collecting Tax from Howlwadaag village of the city.

The reporter also said that the explosive material were buried in the village then remotely controlled.

the attack killed 2 people and wounded several other people including officials from the local government in the field.

after the explosion units of the police arrived at the scene and are now conducting investigations.



AFRICOM

18. [Attack, Kenya] Two Injured By Blasts In Somali Area Of Nairobi

Wednesday, December 19 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/19/us-kenya-explosion-idUSBRE8BI19T20121219>

Two loud blasts in quick succession injured two people near a mosque in the Somali-dominated Eastleigh area of the Kenyan capital Nairobi during the evening rush hour on Wednesday, police said.

The area has been the scene of numerous attacks which authorities suspect are the work of Somali Islamist groups that object to Kenya's armed incursion into neighboring Somalia. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

"There were two explosions and two people were injured near the Al Amin mosque in Eastleigh," Moses Ombati, Nairobi's police chief, told Reuters.

"The two injured were civilians, we are not sure who is behind the attack and we suspect it was grenades."

One person was injured in an grenade attack on Sunday, days after two separate strikes hit the Eastleigh area, injuring local lawmaker Yusuf Hassan.

Kenya has sent troops to pursue Somali militants it blamed for repeated security attacks and the kidnapping of two Western tourists within its borders.

Tensions have risen in the past two months in Eastleigh, commonly dubbed "Little Mogadishu" because of its large Somali population.

In November, street battles erupted between Kenyans and ethnic Somalis in Eastleigh after a bomb on a minibus killed seven people in the area.

Some of Eastleigh's population are refugees but many others are Kenyans of Somali ethnicity and illegal immigrants.

The wave of bombings, shootings and hand-grenade attacks blamed on Somali militants have hit the capital, the port city of Mombasa and towns near the frontier with Somalia, prompting Kenya on Tuesday to order all refugees and asylum seekers to report camps and to bar them from living in towns.

Mounting insecurity is a growing concern as the region's biggest economy prepares for a presidential election in March - the first poll since a contested 2007 vote which unleashed nationwide ethnic violence.



AFRICOM

19. [Attack, Nigeria] Thirty Gunmen Kill Two, Kidnap Expatriate, Bomb Police Station In Katsina

Friday, December 21 2012

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201212210156.html>

In a move that sent panic down the spine of hapless citizens, dare devil gunmen, yesterday, killed two persons even as they kidnapped a French national and bombed Rimi police station in Rimi Local Government Area of Katsina State.

Eyewitness account said the gunmen numbering 30, arrived Rimi town at the wee hours in three vehicles and launched coordinated attacks at both the police station and the resident of the kidnapped French citizen, Mr Francis Colump, site engineer with S.A Vergnet, the firm handling Katsina Windmill Power project.

"They divided themselves into two groups with one of the groups attacking the police station obviously to distract the attention of the police while the other launched the attack at the resident where the kidnapped victim was residing" a police source who prefers anonymity said.

It was gathered that the armed men used gas cylinder and explosive to bomb the police station before attacking the resident of Mr Colump where they killed two persons and shot a mobile police personnel reportedly attached to Mr Colump as his orderly.

Findings revealed that the two men who were killed are Rabe Dan-ungwa, 40, the night watchman and his friend, Abubakar Salisu, 25, who was with him when the armed men struck. The police man reportedly shot by the armed men is said to be receiving treatment at a hospital in Kano.



CENTCOM

20. [Trend, Syria] Syrian Warplanes Blast Mosque As Rebels Take Infantry Base

Sunday, December 16 2012

<http://www.npr.org/2012/12/16/167382008/syrian-warplanes-blast-mosque-as-rebels-take-infantry-base>

An Islamist faction of Syrian rebels captured an infantry base in the northern city of Aleppo, its fighters said Sunday, as forces fighting to topple President Bashar Assad advanced on the country's largest city.

Also Sunday, Syrian warplanes blasted a Palestinian refugee camp near Damascus, killing eight people and wounding dozens, activists said. Some Palestinian groups in the Yarmouk camp have been backing Assad's regime.

The base was the second major army installation taken by the rebels in a week in Aleppo. The rebels have also seized air bases near Aleppo and Damascus in recent weeks.

A statement by the Al-Tawheed Brigade said the rebels "fully liberated" the military facility in Aleppo on Saturday. It was posted on al-Tawheed's official website on Sunday and said the Islamist rebel brigade's commander was killed in the battle.

The complex, known as Hanano Barracks, includes an army base, a recruiting center and a military school.

The Al-Tawheed Brigade is one of the largest rebel groups operating in Aleppo, Syria's largest city, which has been a major front in the civil war since July.

One of the videos posted on the group's website shows the body of a man the narrator says is "the hero and martyr who was killed on the day of liberating the infantry school," apparently the Al-Tawheed commander, Col. Youssef al-Jader. A boy said to be the commander's son is seen crying as he leans over the dead man.

Rebels are seen loading boxes of ammunition onto a truck, and several tanks and armored vehicles are parked nearby.

Another video shows several rebels praying at the captured base. Armed fighters are also seen walking around the infantry school with slogans "Assad Forever" and pictures of Assad and his late father, Hafez, hanging on the walls.

The Assad family has ruled Syria with an iron fist for more than 40 years.

The uprising started in March 2011 as peaceful protests but quickly turned into a civil war after the government's brutal crackdown on dissent.

Activists say more than 40,000 people have been killed in almost 21 months of conflict that has increasingly sectarian overtones.

The opposition fighters mostly come from Syria's majority Sunni Muslim community. Assad's regime is dominated by members of the Alawite sect, an offshoot of Shiite Islam.

On Sunday, fighter jets screamed over Damascus to bomb two areas in the southern part of the capital.



The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said fighter jets carried out six airstrikes the Hajar Aswad area and the neighboring Yarmouk Palestinian camp, where the rebels have been advancing.

At least eight people were killed in the airstrike on Yarmouk, The Observatory said, and dozens were wounded. Several more people were killed in the clashes between rebels and gunmen loyal to Assad that followed the air strike, said Rami Abdul-Rahman, the Observatory's president.

The Palestinians are divided over the crisis in Syria. When the unrest began in March 2011, the half-million-strong community tried to stay on the sidelines. But in recent months, many Palestinians started supporting the uprising, although most insisted the opposition to the regime should be peaceful.

A few groups with longstanding ties to the regime are fighting on the government side, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. The group is led by Ahmed Jibril, a strong ally of Assad.

Abdul-Rahman said the fighting, concentrated on the main street in the heart of the camp about four miles from downtown Damascus was still in progress late Sunday afternoon.

The Observatory relies on reports from activists on the ground. The group said there were casualties in the fighting Sunday.

A resident of Yarmouk told the Associated Press that the clashes between rebels and PFLP-GC gunmen have flared up on Friday when rebels tried to take over the PFLP-GC's headquarters in Yarmouk. The resident spoke condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.



CENTCOM

21. [Attack, Iraq] Bombers Kill 12 In Disputed Iraqi-Kurd Areas

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-iraq-violence-idUSBRE8BG07U20121217>

Bombers killed 12 people in northern Iraqi towns and villages on Monday in the second consecutive day of attacks in areas at the center of a bitter feud between Baghdad and autonomous Kurdistan.

The ethnically mixed, disputed territories - the swathe of land marking Iraq from the area administered by Kurds in the north - have been a potential flashpoint for conflict since the buffer of the last American troops left a year ago.

Two blasts hit a Shi'ite district in Tuz Khurmato, killing at least five and wounding 24 and a truck bomb killed seven in a Shabak minority area near Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of the capital, security and local officials said.

"The bombers are trying to stir tensions, but we are telling them we will be more unified by these attacks," Tuz Khurmato Mayor Shalal Abdul told Reuters. "Those who were killed here include three children and an elderly man."

No group claimed responsibility for Monday's attacks, but the explosions came at a time of heightened tensions between the Arab-led central government in Baghdad and ethnic Kurds over contested land and oil rights.

One person was killed and five were wounded in four blasts around the religiously mixed city of Baquba in Diyala province, where some areas neighboring Kurdistan are disputed, police said.

Last month, Baghdad and Kurdistan sent troops and tanks from their respective armies to reinforce positions around towns in the contested territories, escalating tensions in their long-running dispute, especially over Kirkuk.

MILITARY STANDOFF

Neither Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki nor Kurdistan President Masoud Barzani stand to benefit from letting the standoff slide into conflict, but they may try to use troop movements to shore up support with their constituents, diplomats and analysts say.

Iraqi troops and Kurdish Peshmerga forces have faced off in the past only to step back before any major confrontation. U.S. officials helped ease tensions earlier this year when the two armies faced off near the Syrian border.

Another 11 people were killed in attacks in the ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk on Sunday, authorities said.

Kirkuk sits outside the three northern provinces administered by Kurdistan, but ethnic Kurds lay historical claim to the city and say it should be part of the Kurdish region. The city's Turkmen minority also claim historical rights there.

A referendum to decide if Kurds are the dominant ethnicity, which would strengthen their claim to Kirkuk and its oil riches, has been repeatedly delayed.

Kurds say Iraq's former Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein "Arabised" Kirkuk by moving Arabs there in the 1980s and



1990s.

Kurdistan has run its own government and armed forces since 1991 and is more secure and stable than other parts of Iraq, but it still relies on the central government for a 17-percent share of the national budget and for pipelines to export its oil.

But the Kurdish region increasingly has clashed with Baghdad after signing oil agreements with companies like Exxon Mobil and Chevron to develop its own oilfields, deals the central government dismisses as unconstitutional.





CENTCOM

22. [Attack, Iraq] Wave Of Bombings Kills 25 In Iraq, Mostly In Disputed Areas

Monday, December 17 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraqi-officials-car-bomb-kills-5-in-new-attack-in-disputed-areas-in-the-countrys-north/2012/12/17/987f8da0-481f-11e2-8af9-9b50cb4605a7_story.html

A wave of bombings across Iraq on Monday hit a number of targets, including residents of ethnically disputed areas, killing 25 people and wounding dozens.

The attacks deepen fears that militants are seeking to reignite ethnic and sectarian violence in the country, where tensions remain high over areas contested between Iraq's central government and the Kurdish minority. Also, deadly violence continues between the two dominant ethnic communities — Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

The deadliest of Monday's attacks took place in al-Mouafaqiyah, a village inhabited by families from the Shabak ethnic group. Seven people were killed and 11 were wounded in the bombing, according to police officials.

The village lies near the city of Mosul, 360 kilometers (225 miles) northwest of Baghdad, and is claimed by Arabs, Turkomen and Kurds. The Shabak have their own distinct language and religious beliefs.

Elsewhere in the north, two car bombs went off in a majority Turkomen neighborhood in the city of Tuz Khormato, killing five people and wounding 26, said Mohammed al-Asi, a spokesman for Salahuddin provincial council.

Like the area near the other attack, Tuz Khormato, about 210 kilometers (130 miles) north of Baghdad, has a mix of Arabs, Kurds and Turkomen competing for control of the city.

Tuz Khormato borders the autonomous Kurdish region. Last month, it was the scene of a shootout between Kurdish guards and Iraqi police that killed one civilian. The Iraqi military and Kurdish fighters responded by moving additional troops into disputed areas, raising the specter of further clashes.

Also Monday, police said a roadside bomb hit a bus carrying Lebanese Shiite pilgrims near Samarra, killing one Lebanese national and the Iraqi driver and wounding eight others, including five Lebanese. Also, a car bomb went off on a bus carrying Iranian pilgrims heading to Samarra, killing two, including an Iranian national.

Another car bomb went off in a commercial area in downtown Baghdad in the afternoon, killing three people and wounding 10, police and health officials said.

Shortly after sunset, a car bomb exploded near an open-air car market in northeastern Baghdad, killing six people and wounding 30 others, said police.

Medics in nearby hospitals confirmed the casualties. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

On Sunday, a series of attacks targeting two other cities in disputed northern areas left at least eight dead and dozens wounded.

It was unclear who was behind the latest violence, though Sunni Arab insurgents frequently use coordinated bomb attacks to try to undermine the Shiit-led government's authority.





CENTCOM

23. [Attack, Lebanon] Blast Shakes Lebanese Border Town Near Israel

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-lebanon-explosion-idUSBRE8BG0AR20121217>

A big explosion rocked the southern Lebanese town of Tair Harfa on Monday, five km (three miles) from the border with Israel but there were no casualties, residents said.

A Lebanese security source said the blast was caused by a rocket that had been fired into Lebanon during the 2006 war with Israel but did not detonate on impact.

But Andrea Tenenti, a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping force in Lebanon, said UNIFIL soldiers in the area were still trying to ascertain the cause.

The explosion did kill several farm animals in a field, according to local residents.

A Reuters reporter said that members of the militant group Hezbollah, the Lebanese Army and around 50 members of UNIFIL were at the site of the blast but that he was prevented from approaching the area.

UNIFIL has about 12,000 troops and naval personnel in the country after its expansion under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 that halted the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war in southern Lebanon. The south remains a Hezbollah stronghold.

Despite domestic demands for the group to disarm, Hezbollah keeps stockpiles of weapons - including thousands of rockets - saying it will need them in the event of a new war with Israel.

On October 3, three Hezbollah members were killed when an explosion ripped through a weapons warehouse in the eastern Lebanon town of Nabi Sheet.



CENTCOM

24. [Trend, Lebanon] Hezbollah Weapons Depot Reportedly Blows Up

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/12/17/3114701/hezbollah-weapons-depot-reportedly-blows-up>

An explosion in southern Lebanon on the border with Israel is reported to be a Hezbollah weapons depot.

The blast seriously damaged the building that the weapons were housed in and killed nearby farm animals, but there were no reports of people being injured, according to Reuters.

Members of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, or UNIFIL, were investigating the cause of the explosion.

Hezbollah reportedly sealed off the area, preventing the entrance of the UNIFIL observers, and claimed that the explosion was caused by an Israeli shell that was fired on southern Lebanon during the 2006 war and did not explode at the time.



CENTCOM

25. [Attack, Yemen] Intelligence Official Escapes Assassination Attempt In Hadhramout

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://www.alsahwa-yemen.net/arabic/subjects/5/2012/12/18/25399.htm>

Head of intelligence department in Hadhramout Mohammad Hajeb has escaped an assassination attempt on Tuesday.

Local sources said that the car that Hajeb was inside it exploded, affirming that he was not harmed.

Unidentified gunmen assassinated on Monday an intelligence officer of the Political Security in the southern governorate of Hadhramout.

Assassinations against intelligence officers alarmingly increased during the past few months. Dozens of intelligence officers were assassinated by gunmen on motorcycles.

According to Alsahwah.net correspondent in Hadhramout, unidentified gunmen shot Shaker Bani dead as he get out from his home, pointing out that they could escape.

Unidentified gunmen killed last Tuesday a senior intelligence officer in Hadhramout, Ahmed Baramadah.



CENTCOM

26. [Trend, Syria] Syrian Fighter Jets Bomb Palestinian Refugee Camp In Damascus

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/business/nationworld/sns-ap-ml-syria-20121217,0,5653543,full.story>

Syrian fighter jets bombed a Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus Tuesday for the second time this week after rebels made significant advances, seizing large areas within the camp, activists said.

Meanwhile, American foreign correspondent Richard Engel of NBC said that he and his crew escaped unharmed during a firefight after being held captive for five days by pro-regime gunmen.

The rebels fighting to topple Assad's regime have pressed hard against the regime in the past weeks, capturing air bases and military installations in and around Damascus.

Their offensive in the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk in southern Damascus, which began Friday, is aimed at driving out a pro-government Palestinian faction.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and other activists in the camp said fighter jets dropped bombs on the camp Tuesday afternoon, but there was no immediate word of casualties.

Similar airstrikes on Sunday killed at least eight people in Yarmouk.

When the revolt against Assad's rule began 21 months ago, the half-million-strong Palestinian community in Syria stayed on the sidelines.

But as the civil war deepened, most Palestinians backed the rebels, while some groups — such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command — have been fighting on the government side.

By Tuesday afternoon, the Syrian military deployed several tanks along camp's main entrance, residents said. There were no Syrian government troops in the camp and most of the fighting was between rebels and PFLP-GC gunmen, they said. The group is led by Ahmed Jibril, Assad's longtime ally.

Activist videos posted online show armed men moving through the streets of the Damascus camp, as people cheer their presence and chant "God is great." Gunfire is heard in the background, and the narrator says the rebels are members of the Free Syrian Army.

Rami Abdul-Rahman, chief of the Observatory, said rebels were now in control of most of the camp but intense clashes were continuing in several areas.

The fighting in the camp has forced an exodus of Palestinian refugees and Syrians who came to the camp in past weeks to escape violence elsewhere in the city, according to United Nations officials.

Civilians continue to leave Yarmouk, with some heading to UNRWA installations around Damascus. Others are fleeing to other Syrian cities and many are headed to the Lebanon-Syrian border, said Sami Mshasha, spokesman for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency.

In Geneva, the United Nations said 4 million people need humanitarian aid in Syria.



World Food Program spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs told reporters Tuesday that about 2.5 million Syrians need food aid, but her agency can only reach 1.5 million of them.

The World Health Organization said the Damascus Hospital, the largest hospital in the capital, is now receiving 70 to 100 patients a day whose most frequently observed injuries are burns, gunshots and injuries from explosions resulting from the escalating violence.

WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said women and children are increasingly among the injured and said the hospital has had an increase in cases of severe malnutrition from rural Damascus and other Syrian provinces.

The 21-month battle to bring down the Assad regime has forced some 3 million Syrians from their homes, according to a new estimate. Cold, wet winter weather is making life increasingly difficult for the displaced. Among those who left their homes are more than 500,000 who fled to neighboring countries — Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

As the violence escalates, the Syrian regime's few remaining allies appear to be preparing for the possibility of Assad's fall.

Russia said on Tuesday it was sending warships to the Mediterranean amid official talk about a possible evacuation of its citizens from Syria.

Moscow has been President Bashar Assad's main ally, shielding him from international sanctions over a brutal crackdown on an uprising that began in March 2011 and turned into civil war.

Last week, however, a senior Russian diplomat said for the first time that Assad is losing control and the rebels might win the civil war, a statement that appeared to signal that Moscow has started positioning itself for an endgame in Syria. But the Foreign Ministry disavowed Mikhail Bogdanov's statement the next day, saying his words were misinterpreted and that Moscow's position on the crisis hasn't shifted.

The Russian Defense Ministry did not say whether the navy ships that set off for the Mediterranean are intended for an evacuation of Russian citizens. It said the ships will rotate with those that have been in the area since November.

Russian diplomats said last week however that Moscow is preparing plans to evacuate thousands of Russians from Syria if necessary.

The Interfax news agency, citing unidentified naval sources, reported that the navy command wants the ships to be on hand for the task if needed.

NBC's Engel meanwhile said Tuesday he and members of his network crew escaped unharmed after five days of captivity in Syria, where more than a dozen pro-regime gunmen dragged them from their car, killed one of their rebel escorts and subjected them to mock executions.

Appearing on NBC's "Today" show, an unshaven Engel said he and his team escaped during a firefight Monday night between their captors and rebels at a checkpoint. They crossed into Turkey on Tuesday.

Engel said he believes the kidnapers were a Shiite militia group loyal to the Syrian government.



The Syrian government has made it difficult for foreign journalists and citizens to report in Syria.

Those journalists whom the regime has allowed in are tightly controlled in their movements by Information Ministry minders. Other foreign journalists sneak into Syria illegally.

The kidnapping of foreigners has been rare, but as Syria descends further into chaos, the abduction of Syrians has become increasingly common.

Separately, Russia's Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that two Russians were kidnapped along with an Italian in Syria, and their captors have demanded a ransom for their release.

The three, who worked at a Syrian steel plant, were kidnapped late Monday on the road between Tartus, where Russia has a naval base, and Homs, the ministry said in a statement. It did not specify the amount of the ransom demand.



EUCOM

27. [Trend, England] Kidnapper's Deadly Cache Of Explosives At Huddersfield Home

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/local-west-yorkshire-news/2012/12/18/86081-32446641/>

A man who kidnapped his fiancée and buried her alive has admitted to possessing explosives.

Marcin Kasprzak, 27, who was jailed for life last January after he was convicted of the attempted murder of Michalina Lewandowska, has appeared before a judge again to face new charges.

And the appearance comes just a week after he lost a High Court appeal against his 20-year sentence.

Appearing before judge His Honour Tom Bayliss QC at Leeds Crown Court yesterday, Kasprzak, formerly of Penistone Road, Fenay Bridge, pleaded guilty to eight charges of possessing offensive explosives.

The charges come after police found quantities of eight different chemicals at his Fenay Bridge home on May 30 last year when they searched the house following his arrest for the attempted murder of Ms Lewandowska.

It is thought lawyers had been waiting for his appeal to conclude before they could bring him before the courts for possessing the substances.

The court was not told what quantity of each chemical Kasprzak had but he admitted having no lawful reason for possessing them.

The chemicals included potassium permanganate, aluminium powder, ammonium nitrate and iron oxide.



EUCOM

28. [Law Enforcement, Israel] Bus Bomb Terror Cell Nabbed In Ramallah

Wednesday, December 19 2012

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2012/12/19/Bus-bomb-terror-cell-nabbed-in-Ramallah/UPI-52771355917268/

Israel security agency Shin Bet has arrested members of an alleged terror cell in the Ramallah area supposedly responsible for bombing a bus in Tel Aviv.

Details released Wednesday by Shin Bet said the cell operatives, members of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, were responsible for the Nov. 21 bombing in Tel Aviv in which 26 people were injured.

The arrests thwarted plans to carry out additional attacks in Israel, Shin Bet said.

Among those arrested was Ahmed Salah Ahmed Musa, 25, a member of Hamas who was jailed by Israel previously for plotting attacks. Shin Bet said Musa was the cell leader and compiled intelligence ahead of the bus attack and built the bomb.

Also arrested was Mahmoud Abed al-Jafer Nasser Mafarjah, 18, an Israeli Arab and member of Hamas, who was recruited by Musa to place the bomb in the bus; Fouad Rabah Shukri latzi, 27, a member of Islamic Jihad who was also imprisoned in Israel in the past for his role in terrorist activities; and Mahmoud Mahpoud Said Demra, 25, also a member of Hamas.

Details from their interrogation revealed they planned to carry out a number of attacks, including a drive-by shooting at Israeli soldiers near West Bank settlements, Shin Bet said. Cell members also planned a suicide bomb attack near Israeli government officials.

Mafarjah was indicted in Tel Aviv court Wednesday and charged with aiding the enemy in time of war, attempted murder, conspiracy to commit a crime, causing an explosion, illegal transport of weapons and assisting an illegal organization.

Indictments against the other suspects are pending.



EUCOM

29. [Security, Ireland] Man Caught Holding Petrol Bomb Is Jailed

Wednesday, December 19 2012

<http://www.independent.ie/national-news/courts/man-caught-holding-petrol-bomb-is-jailed-3332212.html>

A man who was caught by gardai while holding a petrol bomb and matches has being jailed for two years.

Alan Lawless (32) of Sallynoggin, Dublin pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to having a petrol bomb at Sallynoggin Road on May 15, 2012.

Judge Patrick McCartan noted that despite having 32 previous convictions the drug addict has only spent one month in prison.

His criminal record includes convictions for theft, larceny, burglary, possession of a knife and drug dealing dating back to 2000 and all dealt with in the District Court. He has one conviction for robbery which was dealt with in the Circuit Court.

Garda Neil O'Leary told Anne Rowland BL, prosecuting, that Lawless had earlier being thrown out of a Londis shop by the elderly owner Dennis English.

He was later spotted by the garda outside the shop crouching down in front of a bottle of white spirits which had a woollen glove stuffed into it.

He had a lighter and two boxes of matches on him. The court heard that there were families living in flats above the shop.

Yvonne Buckley BL, defending, said her client is a drug addict with 32 previous convictions including one for robbery in 2008.

Judge McCartan said he had being shown considerable leniency in the past but had continued to show a disregard for the well being of others.



PACOM

30. [Security, India] Explosive Weighing Over 35Kg Found

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/Explosive-weighing-over-35kg-found/articleshow/17645156.cms>

An explosive known as RT gola was found lying near the jungle area in Daria village on Sunday evening. One of the residents of the village saw the explosive, which was nearly 20-inch long and weighed over 35 kg, at around 5pm and called the police. Police immediately reached the spot. They cordoned off the area up to 500 metres around the bomb and started their investigation.

Officials of the Chandigarh police's bomb squad and sniffer dogs as well reached the spot to scrutinize the bomb.

After much deliberation, police decided not to defuse the bomb on its own and informed the Army.

"It is difficult to say whether it was a dead or a live bomb as it had mud all over it. It was 12-inch broad, 20-inch long and weighed over 35kg. Such bombs are very tricky, as they can explode anytime while moving them. As it was found near human habitation, so we chose to call Army men to the spot," said sub-inspector Milap Chand, head of Chandigarh police's bomb detection squad.

Army men reached the spot and after inspecting the explosive, they decided to take it to their unit. Now it would be defused in the hills near Chandimandir area on Monday.

The Chandigarh railway station is at a distance of just 2km from the spot, where this explosive was found.

Police said that the bomb could cause damage up to a range of three km on exploding.

Police combed the entire area to ensure that no other such explosive was lying there. Police suspect that some scrap dealer threw it in the jungle area. RT gola was used in old cannons.



PACOM

31. [Security, India] Crude Bomb Found Near School In Puducherry

Tuesday, December 18 2012

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_crude-bomb-found-near-school-in-puducherry_1778931

Authorities went into a tizzy after a "live" crude bomb was on Tuesday found on the road near a government school.

Bomb disposal squad rushed to the spot and safely shifted the bomb for defusing it, police said.

Police said an auto-driver had found the crude bomb on the middle of Perumal Koil street in the heart of the town.

A case has been registered.





PACOM

32. [Security, India] Maoist Arms Dump Found In Odisha

Wednesday, December 19 2012

http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailed_news.asp?date=12/19/2012&id=5#5

Security Force (SF) personnel engaged in anti-Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) operations recovered a huge arms dump in Musilimunda forest in Narayanapatna block of Koraput District on December 17, reports The Times of India. The recoveries included five landmines, each weighing about four kilograms, five remote control devices that are used to trigger landmines, one country made gun, huge quantity of Maoist literature, bulk quantity of uniforms and bundles of red cloth that are used to cut out Maoist flags and banners.



PACOM

33. [Attack, India] Civilian Injured In Manipur Bomb Explosion

Wednesday, December 19 2012

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/Imphal/Civilian-injured-in-Manipur-bomb-explosion/Article1-974889.aspx>

A civilian was injured when two powerful bombs, suspected to have been planted by militants at a roadside, exploded in Imphal east district of Manipur today, minutes after a CRPF convoy passed through. Sources said the bombs, made of improvised explosive device (IED), went off at 10.20 am at Porompat water tank area, about 100 metres from Porompat Police Station, while several water tankers were coming to collect water from the tank.

The bombs were planted on both sides of the road.

One of the vehicles of the CRPF's 143rd battalion, escorting the water tanker, which had come to collect water, was damaged and its tyre deflated, the sources said.

According to official reports, a civilian who was yet to be identified, was injured by the splinters and was taken to the casualty department of the nearby J.N.Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital where his condition was stated to be out of danger.

Reports said the bombs might have been planted by suspected militants late last night to attack police and security personnel, who frequently pass through and patrol the area to detect movement of the ultras.

Police personnel from nearby Porompat Police Station, led by senior police officials, cordoned off the area before launching a search operation which was still continuing, sources said.

No individual or group has claimed responsibility for the incident so far.

Official sources said all police and security posts have been alerted to step up frisking within their jurisdiction to prevent movement of armed ultras.



PACOM

34. [Attack, India] One Killed, Two Others Seriously Injured In Powerful Grenade Attack

Thursday, December 20 2012

<http://post.jagran.com/manipurone-killed-in-grenade-explosion-1355988655>

A labourer was killed while two others were seriously injured when militants exploded a powerful grenade at the house of a government contractor in Imphal West district of Manipur, officials said on Thursday.

However, police chased militants and fired at them in which a man, who was driving a car, was injured.

Hospital sources said his condition was out of danger.

Two militants, who came on a two-wheeler, lobbed a powerful grenade at the house of government contractor Laishram Kheda at Shingjamei Liwa Lambi area late Wednesday night killing a labourer on the spot and grievously injuring two others.

The injured were taken to a nearby hospital. Family members of the contractors said they had not received any monetary demand from any militant outfit so far.

In an another separate incident, commandos, attached to Imphal West district police station, on Thursday arrested five militants of two outfits Kangleipak Communist Party-Lamyanba Khuman (KCP-LK) and Kuki National Front (KNF) from different parts of Imphal West, Thoubal and Bishenpur districts.

They were involved in the kidnapping of two labourers of a private brick farm and were demanding ransom, Additional Superintendent of Police (Imphal west district) N Herojit said on Thursday.



PACOM

35. [Security, India] More Explosives Hidden By Maoists Found In Odisha

Thursday, December 20 2012

http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/detailed_news.asp?date1=12/20/2012&id=8#8

The Border Security Force (BSF) personnel recovered four big iron pipes used to make claymore mines, about 40 kilograms of gun powder and a few metres of wires belonging to the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist), during a combing operation inside the Sapalguda forest in Narayanpatna block of Koraput District close to Andhra Pradesh border on December 19, reports Zee News. "No arrest has been made so far. Possibility of the presence of more explosives in the area cannot be ruled out. We have intensified our search operations," Sub-divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Laxmipur, Y Jagannath Rao said.



PACOM

36. [Law Enforcement, India] LTTE Operative Arrested In TN

Thursday, December 20 2012

<http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/24404-ltte-operative-in-tn-arrested.html>

Tamil Nadu 'Q' branch sleuths on Wednesday arrested a key LTTE operative and electronics expert and three men he had recruited in a plan to revive the banned organisation that had been decimated by Sri Lankan forces in 2009.

Investigators made the arrests in information from the Sri Lankan army who recently apprehended two Sri Lankan Tamils on suspicion of attempting to rebuild the outfit. During questioning the men told Lankan officers about an attempt to regroup the LTTE by remaining members who are enlisting Sri Lankan Tamils in the state sympathetic to the Eelam cause. Part of the plan involved targeting important installations in Sri Lanka with bomb attacks.

A 'Q' branch police officer said the arrested Sri Lankan Tamils told Lankan forces that they were part of a mission to create a new "youth group" against the Sri Lankan government. "They informed Lankan officers about a key operative in Chennai imparting training for them.

Police teams led by a deputy superintendent of police surrounded the house on Nallathambi Street in Pammal near Pallavaram, where they were informed that suspects had been staying. They stormed the house and apprehended S Suresh Kumar, 34, D Udaya Doss, 39, T Maheswaran, 33 and K Krishnamurthy, 29. Pammal.

An investigating officer said Suresh Kumar lost his legs in an explosion during the Eelam war and now moves around on a wheelchair. "Two of the men came to Tamil Nadu as refugees in 2001 and 2003, and the others as the war was in its final stages in 2009," the officer said.

As an electronics expert, Suresh Kumar headed a LTTE wing that made explosives. "He specialised in making electronic circuits," the officer said. "We recovered two laptops, incriminating documents, wires, cables and electronic circuit boards and panels from the house."

Investigators said Krishnamurthy, who supplied water cans in the locality, befriended Sri Lankan Tamils and took them to Suresh Kumar. The former LTTE operative trained them to make improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and electronic circuits for a variety of bombs.

During questioning, the arrested men said they had taken the house in Pammal on rent more than two months ago. Doss was a carpenter and Maheswaran a photo editor. Suresh Kumar trained Sri Lankan Tamils and sent them to that country with bomb-making material.

The arrested men were produced before a magistrate's court in Tambaram that remanded them in judicial custody.



PACOM

37. [Security, India] Police Recover Explosives From Maoist-Infested Gaya

Thursday, December 20 2012

<http://in.news.yahoo.com/police-recover-explosives-maoist-infested-gaya-103306450.html>

Police have recovered a huge cache of explosives from a forest area in Bihar's Maoist-infested Gaya district following a two-day combat operation.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the forest area and recovered explosives on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Sub-Divisional Police Officer of Sherghati, Rajesh Kumar, said these explosives were being used by the rebels against the security forces.

"Yesterday, we recovered two cane bombs weighing 20 kilograms each, seven cylinder bombs weighing around 20-25 kilograms each and 10 kilograms of explosives and various other types of chemicals, 150 metres of electric wires, 15 metres of codex wires and four detonators from a Maoist camp," said Kumar.

"Today, we recovered 26 pressure cooker bombs; pressure cookers are made of aluminum, 78 iron pipe bombs and 67 packets of explosives like gelatin and petroleum jelly weighing around 200 grams each from the site, where the blast had occurred," he added.

The police official also mentioned that security has been stepped up around the area.



PACOM

38. [Security, India] India Test-Fires Nuclear Capable Missile

Thursday, December 20 2012

<http://dawn.com/2012/12/20/india-test-fires-nuclear-capable-missile-2/>

India successfully test-fired Prithvi-II, a nuclear capable missile with a strike range of 350 kilometres, on Thursday, the Press Trust of India reported.

The surface-to-surface missile was test-fired from a test range at Chandipur near Balasore (Odisha).

The locally developed missile was test-fired “from a mobile launcher in salvo mode from launch complex-3 of Integrated Test Range”, the IBNLive reported on its website.

India has been developing a range of missiles to strengthen its defence capability, including the short-range Prithvi ballistic missile, the medium-range Agni and Akash missiles, the anti-tank Nag, and the supersonic Brahmos missile, developed jointly with Russia.

India’s missiles are mostly intended for any confrontation with neighbouring Pakistan.

Thursday’s test was unlikely to aggravate tensions between India and Pakistan as both countries routinely conduct missile tests.

The countries normally inform each other before carrying out long-distance missile tests. It was not immediately clear if Pakistan had been informed about Thursday’s test.





NORTHCOM

39. [Security, United States] Bomb Squad Safely Disables Explosive In Harrison

Friday, December 14 2012

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2012/dec/14/bomb-squad-safely-disables-explosive-harrison/?f=news-arkansas>

A bomb squad safely disabled a pipe bomb after evacuating Harrison's City Hall as a precaution.

Authorities say a woman found the device in her home Thursday and brought it to the police department, which is adjacent to City Hall. The Harrison Daily Times reports a bomb squad from Bentonville was called in to disable the device.

City Hall was evacuated as a precaution and employees were sent home for the day.

Bomb technician Michael Meadors says the bomb squad used a water cannon to blow apart the device. Meadors says the explosive was a PVC pipe filled with gunpowder and surrounded by pellets that would have created shrapnel if it had exploded.

Authorities say the woman said the device belonged to a previous resident of her home.



NORTHCOM

40. [Security, United States] Victorville Teens Caught Reportedly Setting Off Explosive Device In School Bathroom

Saturday, December 15 2012

http://www.dailybulletin.com/news/ci_22201166/victorville-teens-caught-reportedly-setting-off-explosive-device

Three Goodwill Education Center students were detained Friday morning after a device similar to a dry-ice bomb in one of the school's bathrooms was set off, sheriff's officials said.

One 17-year-old was arrested on suspicion of incineration of an explosive device. Two other teens were cited on suspicion of manufacturing an explosive device and released, according to a sheriff's news release.

Around 10:30 p.m. Friday, as many people were hearing about the shooting in Connecticut, sheriff's officials in Victorville received a call about an explosion from Goodwill Education Center.

Deputies and county fire personnel, including the sheriff's Bomb and Arson Detail, converged on the school and soon learned the explosion came from an explosive device similar to a dry-ice bomb, officials said.

After conducting a few interviews, they learned the three 17-year-olds had set off the device in one of the school bathrooms.

No one was injured and no property was damaged.



NORTHCOM

41. [Security, United States] Pipe Bomb Found South Of Downtown Colorado Springs

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.gazette.com/articles/bomb-148613-robot-device.html>

A Colorado Springs police bomb squad robot destroyed a pipe bomb Monday afternoon that could have shook the ground on Navajo Street just west of Nevada Avenue, police said.

According to police spokeswoman Barbara Miller, bomb squad investigators told her that the homemade explosive "would have rocked the area and probably disintegrated the truck."

Miller said a man who lives in apartments at 128 Navajo St. reported finding the pipe bomb between a white Toyota pickup, a bush and a large trash container. Investigators told Miller that it appeared whoever planted the explosive tried to set it off, but failed.

According to an officer at the scene, the robot used a water cannon to destroy the explosive just seconds after a member of the bomb squad yelled "Fire in the hole" three times. A loud bang followed and smoke billowed across Navajo Street.

Police did not have any suspects Monday afternoon. Anyone with information that could help with the investigation should call police at 444-7000.

Navajo was closed for about two blocks from Nevada to Tejon Street while the bomb was destroyed. Officers then sent in bomb-sniffing dog Ari to make sure the area was safe before reopening the street just before 2 p.m.

A bomb squad investigator in protective gear recovered what looked like white PVC pipe with black tape on one end.

Lea Somerville, who lives a few houses west of Nevada Avenue, waited near the parking lot of Kings Cleaners while police investigated. She said a neighbor had told her he found the device and reported it as a pipe bomb.

Miller said most of the time the bomb squad responds to such calls, the device does not end up being a true explosive. She advises anyone who finds an object they believe to be suspicious to leave it alone and immediately call police.





NORTHCOM

42. [Trend, United States] Bottles With Explosive Substance Found At Apartment

Monday, December 17 2012

<http://www.kktv.com/news/headlines/Oro-Blanco-And-Carefree-Closed-For-Investigation-Of-Suspicious-Bottles-183802131.html>

Two people were arrested after two homemade bombs exploded in the area of an apartment complex on the northeast side of the Springs.

Authorities say a soda bottle filled with a chemical substance exploded in a mailbox Monday morning at a house next door to the Carefree Village Apartments on Pacer Lane, near Carefree and Oro Blanco. A maintenance man later found a second bottle at the complex by a utility box, which also exploded.

Two other soda bottles, which did not explode, were found in a gutter at the complex.

24-year-old Caleb Long and 21-year-old Tyler Fraser face felony charges of possession of an explosive device. They've also been charged with misdemeanor criminal mischief.

Oro Blanco at Carefree was shut down Monday morning while police and a HAZMAT team investigated.



NORTHCOM

43. [Security, United States] Florida Man, Brother Charged In Plot To Bomb NYC Landmark

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2012/12/18/prosecutors-florida-man-brother-charged-in-plot-to-bomb-nyc-landmark/>

A Pakistani-born man wanted to avenge the deaths of U.S. drone attacks in Afghanistan by blowing up a New York City landmark but lacked the money and materials to carry out the plan, a federal prosecutor said Tuesday.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Karen Gilbert said at a bail hearing that Raees Alam Qazi, 20, researched bomb-making techniques on Internet sites affiliated with al Qaeda, including one using Christmas tree lights, and the FBI recorded phone calls and conversations linking Qazi to a purported “lone wolf” plot.

“He fully intended to do this, and thankfully he didn’t have enough money,” Gilbert said. Referring to casualties in U.S. drone attacks, she added: “He wants to avenge those deaths and kill people.”

Qazi traveled to New York last month in hopes of getting a job to fund his terrorist plans, Gilbert said, but wound up sleeping in public transportation, a mosque and in restaurants, and riding a bicycle around the city looking for potential targets. He then decided to return home on a Greyhound bus and was arrested after arriving back in South Florida, she said.

Qazi, a naturalized U.S. citizen who attended local Florida public schools, confirmed many elements of the plot in a statement to FBI agents after his arrest in late November, Gilbert said. Investigators also found bomb-making and related components at the Qazi family home in Oakland Park, as well as explosives research evidence on a computer used by Qazi.

Qazi is charged along with his brother, 30-year-old taxi driver Sheheryar Alam Qazi, with conspiring to provide material support to terrorists and with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction in the U.S. Both have pleaded not guilty to the charges, which carry a potential life sentence if the men are convicted of both counts.

U.S. Magistrate Judge William Matthewman ordered Raees Qazi held without bail until trial, finding that he is a danger to the community and a flight risk. His older brother has already agreed to pretrial detention, but may seek bail later. A trial is likely many months away.

Gilbert said Raees Qazi was the intended operative, using either a suicide attack or a remote-control device to kill people in a crowded place such as Times Square, a Broadway theater or perhaps on Wall Street. The elder Qazi supported his brother financially and logistically with the knowledge that Raees was planning a terror attack, the prosecutor said.

In one conversation recorded by the FBI, Sheheryar Qazi compared his brother to a “lone wolf, like the Times Square bomber.” Gilbert said Sheheryar Qazi was referring to Faisal Shahzad, who unsuccessfully attempted to detonate a bomb at the New York landmark in May 2010. In another recorded conversation, Sheheryar Qazi says that his brother “wasn’t going to be in this world long.”

Shahzad, a Pakistani-born Connecticut man, was sentenced to life in prison in October 2010.



Raees Qazi's attorney, Daniel Ecarius, tried to persuade the judge to allow his release on bail, noting that Qazi had made money by selling bicycles on the Internet, had no criminal past and had already relinquished his passport. Ecarius suggested Qazi could be released on house arrest with electronic monitoring, but Gilbert urged the judge to keep him locked up.

"He wanted to carry out an attack. If he is released from custody, he will," she said.





NORTHCOM

44. [Security, United States] Man Had 34 Guns, Bomb-Making Materials

Tuesday, December 18 2012

<http://www.ocregister.com/news/unit-381034-police-explosive.html>

Police arrested a 66-year-old Costa Mesa man suspected of living in a business unit where investigators discovered 34 firearms and materials that authorities say could have been used to make explosive devices.

Investigators received an anonymous tip that Baylor Maggenti was in possession of an "improvised explosive device and materials for making explosives" and was living in a unit within a commercial business park in the 1800 block of Whittier Avenue, a police statement said.

Costa Mesa investigators obtained a search warrant, and with the assistance of the Orange County Sheriff's Department Bomb Squad, began a search of the business unit about 6 p.m. Monday, police said.

During the search, police say they discovered "quantities of gun powder, fuse material and other materials sufficient to make improvised explosive devices."

Authorities say no assembled or completed explosive devices were found.

It wasn't immediately clear why the materials had been stockpiled in the unit.

Investigators also discovered 34 firearms during the search of the office unit, including "handguns and rifles, some semiautomatic and some commemorative or collectible in nature," as well as a "short-barreled shotgun and a semiautomatic handgun with potentially illegal modifications," the police statement said.

Maggenti was taken into custody Monday at the business unit and arrested on suspicion of unlawfully possessing explosive making materials. He was taken to the Costa Mesa city jail before being booked into the Orange County Jail.

Orange County Sheriff's Department records show Maggenti, whose occupation is listed as "retired," is being held in lieu of \$150,000 bail.



NORTHCOM

45. [Attack, United States] 'Small Pipe Bomb' Probed At College Park Home

Tuesday, December 18 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/crime-scene/post/small-pipe-bomb-probed-at-college-park-home/2012/12/18/e91b9a84-4963-11e2-820e-17eefac2f939_blog.html

Fire investigators are probing what they say was a "small pipe bomb" that exploded on the porch of a home in College Park on Tuesday morning, authorities said.

The device, which blew up just before 2 a.m., caused minimal damage to the home in the 8800 block of 48th Avenue, authorities said. No one was hurt.

Fire officials declined to release other details about the device and the home where it exploded.

WJLA reported that a small explosive device was also found outside a police station in Northeast Washington on Tuesday and detonated by authorities. It remains unclear whether the cases are related.



NORTHCOM

46. [Law Enforcement, United States] Bomb-Making Ingredients Found In Student's Galloway Township Home

Wednesday, December 19 2012

<http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Bomb-Making-Ingredients-Found-in-Students-Galloway-Township-Home-Cops-184075961.html>

Police arrested a teen boy after they say they found ingredients used to create an explosive device at his home.

On Tuesday, at 2 p.m., police say they were contacted by officials at Cedar Creek High School in Egg Harbor City. The administrators told investigators that they were concerned about the behavior of a 16-year-old student.

Police took the student from Cedar Creek and brought him to the Galloway Township Police Department. Investigators say there was initially no indication the student posed a threat to anyone at Cedar Creek.

Investigators from Galloway Township as well as the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office went to the student's home on the 300 block of East Spencer Lane. Investigators say they found several items, including electronic parts and chemicals, that would cause an explosion if mixed together. The student was arrested and charged with possession of a weapon, an explosive device. He was taken to Harborfields Juvenile Detention Facility.

Police and school officials conducted a sweep of Cedar Creek High School as a precaution. Nothing was found.



NORTHCOM

47. [Law Enforcement, United States] Monserrate Shirley, Mark Leonard, Robert Leonard Arrested In Deadly Indianapolis Home Explosion

Friday, December 21 2012

<http://www.theindychannel.com/news/local-news/monserrate-shirley-mark-leonard-robert-leonard-arrested-in-deadly-indianapolis-home-explosion>

Three people have been arrested in the explosion on Indianapolis' south side that killed two neighbors and damaged dozens of homes, RTV6 has learned.

Monserrate Shirley and her boyfriend, Mark Leonard, who lived in the home, along with Leonard's brother, Robert Leonard, were arrested Friday on numerous charges, including murder and arson.

The couple, who lived in the home at 8349 Fieldfare Way along with Shirley's 12-year-old daughter, was visiting a Lawrenceburg casino the night of Nov. 10 when the blast rocked their Richmond Hill subdivision, leveling five homes and damaging dozens more.

The death penalty will be under consideration in the case, sources told RTV6.

A probable cause affidavit will be released Friday that will indicate that the explosion sparked from fireplace tampering and a microwave oven, sources told RTV6. Additional details of how prosecutors think that sparked the explosion are expected to be released.

Authorities believe that the the explosion was concocted in a financial scheme.

The Call 6 Investigators have uncovered details pointing to significant financial problems for the couple.

Shirley filed bankruptcy in 2007 with her then husband, but that case was dismissed this June because they failed to make the required payments, documents show.

According to court documents, the home had two mortgages -- one for more than \$160,000 and a second for nearly \$65,000.

The 9-year-old home with four bedrooms and two and a half baths was put up for a short sale in March 2011, documents show.

The home was initially listed for \$188,900, but the price was dropped to \$154,900 four months later and to \$149,900 in January, before it was taken off the market.

RTV6 interviewed Shirley and Mark Leonard in the aftermath of the explosion.

"We consider ourselves pretty lucky right now, to be honest with you," he said. "It's miserable, but we're making do with what we've got."

The couple, who spoke in the office of their attorney, said they had lost everything and had endured days of questioning with investigators.

"It's a big devastation, and we're doing everything we can do help the police investigators, the fire department, the (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives)," Leonard said.

"People are talking to me and asking me questions. I mean, I tell everyone the truth," Shirley said. "Everybody's after me, asking me questions. I've answered everything."

