



Weekly News Update

Volume 2, Issue 25

22 June 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-tsolutions.com> using your government (.mil or .gov) email account.



A car bomb exploded near a university bus in Quetta, Pakistan killing three students and wounding over 25 other people, most of them students. (Picture: Naseer Ahmed/REUTERS)

[See [Roadside Bomb Hits Bus, Killing Five Students Heading To IT College In Pakistan](#)]

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1. [Attack, Pakistan] Bombs In Pakistani Tribal Region Kill 33 People

Saturday, June 16 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/official-bomb-blast-kills-3-injures-15-in-northwest-pakistan-near-afghan-border/2012/06/16/gJQAMQUYgV_story.html

Two bombs killed 33 people in tribal areas of northwestern Pakistan on Saturday, officials and witnesses said, a reminder of the instability wracking the nuclear-armed country.

The first blast, a car bomb, hit a crowded bazaar in the town of Landi Kotal in the Khyber region near the Afghan border, government administrator Khalid Mumtaz said. It killed 26 people and wounded over 50 others. Shops and vehicles were badly damaged in the morning attack.



Hundreds of people were in the bazaar when the parked explosives-laden car blew up. TV footage showed the charred skeleton of the car and local residents rushing to help take the victims to

hospitals. One of the wounded, 45-year-old Khan Mohammed, said he was sitting with a nephew in his shop when he saw a vehicle stopping in the street. Moments later he heard a massive blast.

“Something hit me in my shoulder and I fainted,” he said, speaking from a hospital bed. He said two of his nephews who were outside the shop at the time of the explosion were killed and that he was worried for friends hurt in the attack.

The Pakistani army has carried out several operations to flush out Islamist militants in the Afghan border regions. Landi Kotal is near one of the two crossings for NATO supplies heading across the border into Afghanistan, but Islamabad closed the route last year to protest U.S. airstrikes that accidentally hit Pakistani troops.

Later in the nearby district of Kohat, a bomb hidden in a handcart killed seven people, among them police officers, said police officer Naeem Khan. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the blasts, but suspicion fell on Pakistani Taliban insurgents who often target security forces and public places with bombings and shooting attacks.

Also Saturday, violence erupted in the southwestern town of Kucklak after a man allegedly tried to burn the copy of Islam’s holy book. Angered over the incident, residents rallied and torched a police station and five vehicles, said police official Shaukat Ali Khan. Khan said the man who allegedly tried to burn the Quran has been arrested and that the police were trying to restore order.

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2. [Attack, Pakistan] Roadside Bomb Hits Bus, Killing Five Students Heading To IT College In Pakistan

Monday, June 18 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/roadside-bomb-hits-bus-killing-4-students-and-wounding-50-in-southwest-pakistan/2012/06/18/gJQA43VVkv_story.html

A bomb tore into a bus heading to a university in southwestern Pakistan on Monday, killing five students and injuring more than 50 people, police said.

The attack took place in the city of Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province. Police declined to say who they suspected in the latest blast to rock a region that is frequently hit by acts of violence.

Islamist militants often attack security force or government targets, as do separatist rebels, who also kill settlers from other parts of Pakistan. Sunni extremists also frequently kill Shiites in the region, sometimes pulling them off buses and gunning them down.

The bus targeted Monday was heading to the Baluchistan University of Information Technology in an upmarket neighborhood of Quetta.

Police officer Mir Zubair Mahmood said five students on the bus were killed and scores were wounded, as were several passers-by. Police initially said it was a motorcycle bomb, but later said it was a car bomb that was detonated remotely.



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3. [Attack, Afghanistan] Bomb Attack Leaves Six Dead In Afghanistan's Kapisa Province

Monday, June 18 2012

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/06/18/2855296/bomb-attack-leaves-six-dead-in.html>

Four police officers and two civilians were killed on Monday when Taliban insurgents exploded a remote-controlled bomb in eastern Kapisa province, local officials said.

The blast – which occurred before midday at a bazaar in the town of Tagab, the capital of Kapisa's Tagab district – also wounded 13 civilians, district police chief Colonel Sher Shah Yousufzai told McClatchy by phone from the scene.

However, a statement by Afghanistan's interior ministry put the number of wounded at 17. It said the dead included an Afghan Local Police commander named Karimullah and his son.

The wounded had been taken to a nearby hospital for treatment, the ministry statement said.

Security in some areas of Kapisa – which borders Kabul province, to the northeast of the Afghan capital – has reportedly deteriorated in recent months. Tagab is one of several insurgent strongholds in the province and the site of many attacks on Afghan government and coalition forces.

French troops, who have had responsibility for security in Kapisa, are in the process of passing control to Afghan forces, and will be withdrawn by the end of the year. Four French soldiers were killed and five wounded in Kapisa's Nirjab district nine days ago when a suicide bomber attacked a French patrol, also wounding three Afghan civilians.

In January, four French soldiers were shot dead by an Afghan counterpart at a joint French-Afghan base at Tagab. A fifth soldier later died of his injuries.

The January incident prompted France's then-president Nicolas Sarkozy to accelerate his troops' departure from Afghanistan by a year, to the end of 2013. François Hollande, Sarkozy's recently-elected successor, has resisted pressure from the White House to back away from his pledge to withdraw them 12 months earlier.

Also on Monday, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), as the coalition is formally known, said one of its service members had died of wounds following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan. ISAF refused to provide any details about the location of the attack or the nationality of the service member.

ISAF said it had no information about another attack on Monday in which two Italian soldiers were reportedly injured after their patrol in southeastern Afghanistan was targeted by an improvised explosive device, or home-made bomb.

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4. [Attack, Afghanistan] Three Afghan Police Officers Killed In Uruzgan Province

Saturday, June 16 2012

<http://www.khaama.com/three-afghan-police-officers-killed-in-uruzgan-province-901>

According to local authorities in south-western Uruzgan province at least 4 Afghan police forces were killed or injured following an improvised explosive device attack.

Provincial governor spokesman Abdullah Hemat confirming the report said the incident took place in between Tarinkowt to Chanator highway after an Afghan national police vehicle struck with a roadside bomb.

Mr. Hemat further added at least 3 Afghan police forces were killed and another one was injured following the explosion.

Taliban militants group claimed responsibility behind the attack. A spokesman for the Taliban group Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said at least 8 Afghan police forces including one of their commander, Naqibullah was killed following the explosion.



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5. [Attack, Pakistan] Four Cops Among Seven Killed In Kohat Blast

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-15408-Four-cops-among-seven-killed-in-Kohat-blast>

Four cops and three civilians, including a child, were killed when an improvised explosive device (IED) placed in a cart went off near the new bus stand on Bannu Road here on Saturday.

Seven cops and three civilians sustained injuries in the incident.

Official sources said that personnel of the Elite Force were travelling in a van when it was targeted with an IED as soon as it reached near the bus stand. The sources said that seven persons, including four cops, died on the spot and 10 others sustained injuries. Another car passing through the area at the time of the blast was also damaged. An official of the bomb disposal unit said that 10-kg explosives were used in the blast. Locals said that eight shops were also damaged in the explosion.

The injured were taken to the District Headquarters Hospital Kohat from where two of them were referred to a hospital in Peshawar.

The slain cops were identified as constables Naqeebullah, Tasawwar Hussain, Fahad and Qaiser Iqbal. One of the civilians killed in the blast was identified, as Qasim while the name of two dead could not be ascertained.

The injured cops included SHO Saddar Police Station Umar Hayat, Assistant Sub-Inspector Gul Janan, driver Adil and constables Sabir, Zubair and Fahim Abbas.

Meanwhile, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.

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6. [Attack, Afghanistan] Afghanistan's South Rocked By Deadly Attacks

Tuesday, June 19 2012

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/06/201261945756534876.html>

Eleven Taliban fighters have struck two Afghan and NATO bases in Kandahar province, while a NATO soldier was also killed in the troubled south, officials say.

Seven armed men stormed a joint Afghan-NATO base in Shah Wali Kot district at around 3:30am (23:00 GMT Monday), sparking a 30-minute gun battle that left all the attackers dead, Kandahar governor's spokesman Jawed Faisal said.

Al Jazeera's Bernard Smith, reporting from Kabul, said the attackers "breached the perimeter security fence" of the base but no coalition soldiers were killed.

But Faisal and provincial police chief General Abdul Raziq said a foreigner had been killed and two wounded, with Faisal describing the fatality as a civilian contractor. Their nationalities were unclear.

Hours later, four armed men wearing police uniforms struck a police and NATO base in Kandahar city, triggering a firefight in which four officers and the attackers were killed, Raziq said.

Nine police were wounded, he said.

Green-on-blue incidents

Police witnesses said the attackers all had the uniform and equipment of regular officers, and were led into the base by a police captain who fled afterwards. Two other officers were arrested over the assault.

ISAF said one of its soldiers died following another alleged Taliban attack in southern Afghanistan on Tuesday, but did not give details of the incident or its location.

The attacks came a day after men wearing Afghan police uniforms opened fire on NATO soldiers in Kandahar, killing one before fleeing.

That incident brought to 23 the number of Western troops killed in 17 so-called green-on-blue incidents so far this year in Afghanistan, where 130,000 foreign soldiers are helping Kabul fight the Taliban.

"The International Security Assistance Force confirms that three individuals in Afghan police uniforms turned their weapons against coalition service members in southern Afghanistan yesterday, killing one ISAF service member," the alliance said.

A police official in Zhary district said the dead soldier was American, but there was no immediate confirmation.

ISAF gave no further details of the incident or the soldier's nationality, though most coalition forces in Kandahar are American.

An increasing number of Afghan troops have turned their weapons against NATO soldiers as the decade-long war has progressed.

Some of the assaults are claimed by the Taliban, who say they have infiltrated the ranks of Afghan security forces, but many are attributed to cultural differences and antagonism between the allied forces.

The last such incident occurred in May, when Afghan police officers killed two British soldiers in Helmand.

'Guardian angels'

The US-led ISAF has taken security measures in response to the shootings, including assigning "guardian angels" - soldiers who watch over their comrades as they sleep.

Tuesday's violence came as Afghanistan's attorney general accused Pakistan over an unprecedented bloody sectarian suicide attack in Kabul last December that killed more than 80 Shia Muslims on their holiest day.

Eshaq Aliko said the assault was planned in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar and masterminded by "some spy agencies in our neighbouring countries".

Many in Afghanistan accuse Pakistani intelligence of supporting Islamist armed groups, who have strongholds in Pakistan, and of failing to cut their historic ties to the Taliban.

On Monday, a Taliban roadside bombing killed eight civilians, including women and children, in the southern province of Helmand, the interior ministry said.

President Hamid Karzai condemned the civilian deaths, saying the attack showed the fighters' "true face of brutality".

The Western coalition is to hand responsibility for security to Afghan forces by mid-2013 and play a support role up to the final withdrawal by the end of 2014.

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7. [Attack, Afghanistan] Deadly Suicide Attack Hits Afghan City

Wednesday, June 20 2012

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/06/201262095612298636.html>

A suicide bomber on a motorbike has attacked a convoy of NATO troops in the eastern Afghan city of Khost, killing 17 people, hospital officials have said, the second attack on foreign forces in the troubled province this month.

At least 36 people were wounded in Wednesday's blast, including women and children, officials at the main hospital in the city near the Pakistan border said. Police and

Witnesses at the scene reported US casualties while police were also said to be among the dead.

A spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said there was an attack in the city involving ISAF and Afghan forces, but said that he had no confirmation about casualties.

Earlier this month, the Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack on a US base in the province in which a US soldier, an American contractor and an Afghan civilian were killed, ISAF said.

It said 14 fighters were killed in the June 1 attack carried out by fighters wearing suicide-bomb vests and firing rocket-propelled grenades.

Khost is a main area of operations for the Taliban-linked Haqqani armed group which the US says has been behind a string of bombings in Kabul as well as attacks on foreign forces in the countryside.

Leon Panetta, the US defence secretary, blamed the group for the attack on the base and vowed to fight them.

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8. [Attack, Pakistan] Peshawar Blast Kills Two, Injures Over 20

Thursday, June 21 2012

https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_240_151207_43/content/Diisplay/SAP20120621093005

Now let us take you to Peshawar where a blast has taken place near Hazar Khwani Bazaar. What is the situation there, let us contact Dawn News correspondent Zahir Shah Shirazi.

[Begin live relay] [Anchor Nazash Farooq] Zahir, give us more details.

[Zahir Shah Shirazi] Well Nazish, the situation at the site indicates that the bomb was planted on a donkey-cart and it went off near Hazar Khawani. According to latest reports, two people have been killed while more than 20 have been injured. Police have yet to confirm the nature of the blast.

However, the injured are being taken to Lady Reading Hospital, where the hospital administration confirmed death of two people while more than 21 other people are injured. The injured include several women and children, who were present near the mausoleum when the blast took place.

[Farooq] Zahir, is it safe to say that the mausoleum was target of this act of terrorism?

[Shirazi] As far as targeting of mausoleums is concerned, the banned Lashkar-e-Islam group in Khyber Agency is the outfit which has carried out such acts in the past. So far, no group has claimed responsibility for the incident.

However, the way women and children have been injured today, usually Thursday is the day when women and children visit such mausoleums in large number. Obviously, it looks as if the mausoleum has been targeted. No group has claimed responsibility so far. However, it is speculated that extremists groups have targeted mosques and mausoleums in the past and such groups could be involved in this incident too. The injured have been taken to hospital and the blast has not only damaged the mausoleum but has also damaged nearby buildings.

[Farooq] Zahir, you stated that over 20 people have been injured in the blast. Which hospitals they have been taken to and has the hospital administration said anything about their condition?

[Shirazi] All the injured have been taken to Lady Reading Hospital and about 21 people have been injured, including women and seven children. Two deaths have been confirmed by the hospital administration and some of the injured are in critical condition. Therefore, the death toll is feared to rise further.

[Farooq] Many thanks, Zahir Shah Shirazi, for giving us the details. [end live relay]

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9. [Attack, Pakistan] Two Bomb Blasts Kill Four In Pakistan

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://www.irna.ir/News/Politic/Two-bomb-blasts-kill-4-in-Pakistan/80194232>

Two bomb blasts in Pakistan have killed at least four people and injured dozens others, police and witnesses said.

A bomb exploded near a shrine in the outskirts of the northwestern city of Peshawar, killing three people and injuring 11 others, state television said.

The blast took place near a shrine at Hazarkhuwani area of Peshawar. The bomb was attached to a vehicle. The injured were shifted to a main hospital in Peshawar. TV footage showed the injured were being brought to hospital.

The second blast took place in a mosque in southwestern Balochistan province, killing one person and injuring at least 10 others, witnesses said.

The blast occurred in Farooqia Mosque in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, when the people were leaving the mosque after prayers.

TV channels reported that the injured were shifted to the city's main hospital.

Police sources said several injured were registered critical.

No group claimed responsibility for both blasts.



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10. [Attack, Pakistan] Quetta Mosque Blast Kills Two

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://paktribune.com/news/Quetta-mosque-blast-kills-two-250852.html>

Two people were killed and 17 others injured in a bomb blast in a mosque in Gausabad area of Satellite Town on Thursday.

According to Quetta Deputy Commissioner Hashim Gilzai, the bomb was planted inside Farooqia Mosque. "Around 400 to 500 people were offering Asr prayers when an explosive device went off," said Ajmal Mustafa, a witness. "The bomb was fixed to a pillar of the mosque."

According to Bomb Disposal Squad, around four to five kilogrammes of explosive material were used in the bombing, which also damaged the mosque partly. The deceased were identified as Mohsin and Inayatullah. The deceased and injured were taken to Provincial Sendman Hospital.

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11. [Attack, Afghanistan] Twenty Dead In Taliban Siege Of Afghan Hotel; NATO Blames Haqqanis

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/22/us-afghanistan-hotel-idUSBRE85K1S920120622>

Elite Afghan police backed by NATO forces ended a 12-hour siege on Friday at a popular lakeside hotel outside Kabul, leaving at least 20 dead after Taliban gunmen stormed the lakeside building, bursting into a party and seizing dozens of hostages.

The night-time assault on the hotel with rocket-propelled grenades, suicide vests and machine guns again proved how potent the Islamist insurgency remains after a decade of war.

The commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan said the attack bore the signature of the Taliban-linked Haqqani group that he said continued to operate from Pakistan, a charge that could further escalate tensions with Islamabad.

General John Allen's comments come days after U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Washington was at the limits of its patience with Pakistan over the existence of militant networks including the Haqqanis.

Pakistan says it is doing everything it can to fight militants on its side of the border and accuses Afghanistan of trying to shift the blame for its failure to combat the insurgency.

At the hotel, terrified guests jumped into the lake in the darkness to escape the carnage, Afghan officials and residents said. Up to 300 people had been inside the hotel when the attack began.

Afghan interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said 12 to 15 civilians, two hotel guards and a policeman were killed in the gunbattle at the Spozhmai hotel, overlooking Qargha Lake. Five attackers were also killed.

The attack, quickly claimed by the Afghan Taliban, again showed the ability of insurgents to stage high-profile raids even as NATO nations prepare to withdraw most of their combat troops by the end of 2014 and leave Afghans to lead the fight.

"Afghan National Security Forces and coalition military sources acknowledge that this attack bears the signature of the Haqqani network, which continues to target and kill innocent Afghans and blatantly violate Afghan sovereignty from the safety of Pakistan," General Allen said in a statement.

Blood was splattered over the hotel floor and the crumpled body of a man lay in the garden. Women and children were among the wounded.

"We heard a heavy explosion from a rocket-propelled grenade. We tried to escape, but we were surrounded by suicide bombers. We hid ourselves behind a tree until morning. God protected us," said Abdullah Samadi, 24.

The gunmen, Samadi said, had been closely watching their prisoners and searching for illegal stocks of wine.

"Around dawn they came closer to us and we had to jump in the water. We were there until 9 a.m. and then the situation got better and we slowly, slowly swam toward security forces," he said.

Sediqqi said the Taliban were using civilians as human shields to defend themselves and held about 50 people hostage late into Friday morning.

Elite Afghan quick-response police backed by NATO troops freed at least 35 hostages in an operation that only began in earnest after sunrise to help security forces avoid civilian deaths in night-time confusion.

The Taliban complained wealthy Afghans and foreigners used the hotel, about 10 km (6 miles) from the center of Kabul, for "prostitution" and "wild parties" ahead of the Friday religious day holiday.

Launching their annual offensive this spring, the Taliban threatened to attack more government officials and rich Afghans, but the hotel assault was one of few in which multiple hostages were taken since the start of the war, now in its 11th year.

President Hamid Karzai said attacking a place where people went for picnics was a sign of defeat for the enemies of Afghanistan.

"This is a crime against humanity because they targeted children, women and civilians picnicking at the lake. There wasn't even a single soldier around there," said General Mohammad Zahir, head of the Kabul police investigation unit.

Television pictures showed several people wading out of the lake onto a balcony and clambering over a wall to safety.

NATO attack helicopters could be seen over the single-storey hotel building and a balcony popular with guests for its sunset views, while a pall of smoke rose into the air.

NEW FACE OF INSURGENCY?

Soldiers and police fanned out around the hotel at dawn, arriving in cars and armored Humvee vehicles and taking cover behind trees flanking the lake and a nearby golf course.

Qargha Lake is one of Kabul's few options for weekend getaways. Restaurants and hotels that dot the shore are popular with Afghan government officials and businessmen, particularly on Thursday nights.

Guests at the Spozhmai must pass through security checks before entering the hotel, where tables with umbrellas overlook the water, but security is relatively light for a city vulnerable to militant attacks.

Violence across Afghanistan has surged in recent days, with three U.S. soldiers and more than a dozen civilians killed in successive attacks, mostly in the country's east, where NATO-led forces have focused their efforts during the summer fighting months.

NATO commanders, halfway into the process of transferring security responsibility to Afghan forces, are racing through training for the Afghan army and police, including holding basic literacy classes for recruits.

Well-planned assaults in Kabul in the past year have raised questions about whether the Taliban and their al Qaeda-linked Haqqani network allies have shifted tactics to embrace attacks on landmarks, foreigners and Afghanistan's elite, extending a guerrilla war once primarily waged in the countryside.

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12. [Attack, Nigeria] At Least 12 Killed In Bomb Attacks On Churches In Nigeria

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/06/17/nigeria-3-church-blasts-rock-northern-state/>

A Nigerian Red Cross official says at least 12 people were killed and 80 wounded in bomb attacks on three churches in the country's north.

Andronicus Adeyemo says 10 people were killed and at least 29 wounded in a blast in the city of Kaduna Sunday morning. He says two people died and 51 were wounded in two church attacks in the nearby city of Zaria. He says the Zaria attacks occurred about 10 minutes apart in different parts of the city.

Churches have been increasingly targeted by violence in Nigeria, a nation of more than 160 million people. An Easter Day blast in Kaduna left at least 38 people dead. A Christmas Day suicide bombing of a Catholic church in Madalla near Nigeria's capital killed at least 44 people.



Authorities said they had no immediate suspects for Sunday's attacks, though a radical Islamist sect known as Boko Haram has claimed similar attacks in the past.

Boko Haram, whose name means "Western education is sacrilege" in the Hausa language of Nigeria's north, is waging an increasingly bloody fight with security agencies and the public. More than 560 people have been killed in violence blamed on the sect this year alone, according to an Associated Press count.

Kaduna state, which sits on Nigeria's dividing line between its largely Christian south and Muslim north, was at the heart of postelection violence in April 2011. Mobs armed with machetes and poison-tipped arrows took over streets of Kaduna and the state's rural countryside after election officials declared President Goodluck Jonathan the winner. Followers of his main opponent, former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari, a Muslim, quickly alleged the vote had been rigged, though observers largely declared the vote fair.

According to Human Rights Watch, at least 800 were killed in the post-election violence. Of the 800, at least 680 people were killed in Kaduna State alone.

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13. [Special Interest, Mali] Boko Haram: Mali Connection?

Thursday, June 14 2012

<http://www.thecuttingedge news.com/index.php?article=74275&pageid=20&pagename=Security>

According to the President of Niger Mahamdou Issoufou, the rebellion in Mali has direct links to the terrorist organization Boko Haram operating in Nigeria. Like Boko Haram the rebel faction Ansar Dine in Mali is an Islamic fundamentalist group that has links to Al Qaeda in North Africa. Their common ties likely mean that the two groups have members that train together and are likely sharing weapons and other resources. It has also been reported that Boko Haram has fighters in Mali. The link has led to speculation as to whether the impending multilateral intervention in Mali will lead to increased activity in Nigeria and whether militants will cross from one territory to the other.

The link between Boko Haram, Al Qaeda, and Ansar Dine seems more functional than ideological. The groups are working together along the lines of their common interests. However in totality their alliance does not appear to be as cohesive as has been speculated. The agenda of Boko Haram is as political as it is religious and ideological. It appears that they have financial backing from elite elements from the north of Nigeria. Ansar Dine financial backing is largely from Qatar in the Middle East. Aside from the mutual benefit from training and weapons, they do not appear to have any substantive intersecting interests with Ansar Dine. Still since the collapse of the regime in Libya, more weapons and munitions have been floating around the Sahara region than ever before. Military action in Mali will see the weapons move to other territories perhaps even back into Libya where local lords have carved out territories under their control.

One of the likely beneficiaries of the multilateral intervention in Mali may indeed be Boko Haram. If their strategic Al Qaeda ally Ansar Dine is defeated, their weapons and much of their support could come to Northern Nigeria where Boko Haram has come under increasing crackdowns on their hideouts by security forces in Nigeria. Al Qaeda in Algeria may also get a boost of both weapons and fighters after the multilateral intervention in Mali. Mauritania along with Niger are also both likely to have greater security threats along their western and northern fronts respectively pending the multilateral intervention in Mali. All three states have held meetings in Nouakchott, Mauritania and have stepped up patrols along their border with Mali. Along with Nigeria, all three of Mali's neighbors are under increased security risk that will not go away with the collapse of the rebellion in Mali. Just as the governments of surrounding countries are increasing their vigilance to guard against the threat coming from Mali, investors and firms operating in these countries need to also take steps to guard against the rising political risks they face as a result of these developments.

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14. [Attack, Somalia] Suicide Car Bomb Wounds Five In Somali Capital

Sunday, June 17 2012

http://www.keydmedia.net/en/news/article/suicide_car_bomb_wounds_five_in_somali_capital/

At least Five people, including government soldiers were injured on Sunday after a car-packed with explosives went off near a densely populated big market in Mogadishu, Somali capital, Keydmedia reports.

Eyewitnesses told Keydmedia English News Service that a small luxury car-laden with explosives detonated close an army base at Suuq-Bacaad market in Mogadishu's Yaqshid district, wounding 5 people, some Somali soldiers were among the victimized ones.

Mohaydin Mohammed Hassa Jurus, the commissioner of Yaqshid district who spoke with our Keydmedia English News correspondent in Mogadishu, confirmed that the soldiers intercepted the attack, but prevented from entering inside the market.

He added that security forces have reached the Bomb explosion site and began conducting search operation to know the masterminds.

No group has immediately said it was behind the suicide attack.

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15. [Trend, Somalia] Eight Militants Killed In Fighting Near Afmadow Town

Sunday, June 17 2012

http://www.keydmedia.net/en/news/article/official_eight_militants_killed_in_fighting_near_afmadow_town/

At least Eight Al shabab militants have been killed in a heavy skirmish took place on Sunday in villages nearby Afmadow town, which is just 620 Kilometers, south of Mogadishu, Keydmedia reports.

According to local witnesses the fighting broke out shortly after Al shabab agents armed with rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and small rifles attacked several military positions located around the town of Afmadow in Lower Jubba region that are manned by Somali and Kenyan troops.

“The allied troops forces managed to ward off an attack by Al shabab fighters on bases near Afmadow town. At least 8 militants lost their lives and one was captured in a life during the combat,” said a TFG military official on condition of anonymity because he was authorized to speak to the Media.

For his side, an Al shabab commander claimed victory over the attack, saying his fighters briefly took over the area and killed many Somali and Kenya soldiers in their attack.

Afmadow town fell to Somali and Kenyan army peacefully last month after leaving Al shabab fighters from the city.

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16. [Security, Somalia] Somali Security Forces Seize Explosives And Detonators In Beledweyne

Wednesday, June 20 2012

http://www.keydmedia.net/en/news/article/somali_security_forces_seize_explosives_and_detonators_in_beledweyne/

The security forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia on Wednesday said they had seized explosive devices and detonators in an operation they carried out in Beledweyne town, Keydmedia reports.

Ahmed Abdulle Inji, a TFG official in Hiiraan region, told reporters that the security forces arrested at least four people carrying explosives they were planning to detonate Somali army bases in Beledweyne town, some 206 miles (332 km) north of Mogadishu, Somali capital.

“These assailants are from elements of Al shabaab who have been smuggling explosive devices into the TFG controlled district of Beledweyne. They want to create insecurity in the town by carrying out suicide and car bombings as they did in the past,” added Mr. Inji.

Ahmed Abdulle Inji, emphasized that these operations against Al Qaeda-linked Al shabab group will continue until to insure the overall security situation of the central town of Beledweyne, as he put it.

On December 31, 2011, the Transitional Federal Government retook control of Beledweyne from the Al-Shabaab militants.

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17. [Attack, Iraq] Car Bombs Kill 26 On Last Day Of Iraq Pilgrimage

Saturday, June 16 2012

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-06-16/iraq-pilgrimage-bombs/55639496/1>

Two car bombs in Iraq's capital killed at least 26 people Saturday on the last day of a Shiite pilgrimage already hit by multiple bombings. The blasts, one in a heavily guarded area close to a revered shrine, raised the week's death toll to more than 100 and cast further doubt on the divided government's ability to secure the country after the American withdrawal.

Black plumes of smoke filled the sky over Baghdad's northern Kazimiyah neighborhood, where the shrine to eighth-century saint Imam Moussa al-Kadhim draws hundreds of thousands of pilgrims each year. One of the bombs tore into throngs of people who packed the streets nearby, carrying aloft symbolic coffins and beating their chests in mourning to mark his martyrdom.

Three days before, nearly two dozen coordinated bombs around the country killed 72 people. Al-Qaida's Iraqi affiliate on Saturday claimed responsibility for that attack, which marked one of the deadliest days in Iraq since the last U.S. troops left in December.

The fierce wave of bombings targeting Shiites suggests that the al-Qaida-allied Sunni militants are stepping up their periodic attacks — which recently have come every few weeks — to try to exploit sectarian cracks in the elected government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and possibly spark another round of the bloodshed between Sunni and Shiite Muslims that brought Iraq to the brink of civil war only a few years ago. Shiite religious commemorations are frequent targets of these attacks, although overall levels of violence are still down considerably from then.

The sheer number of blasts during the al-Kadhim pilgrimage shows the ability of al-Qaida to retain and perhaps rebuild its bombings networks despite heavy blows struck to the organization by U.S. forces and allied Sunni militias prior to the American withdrawal. The bombers' ability to penetrate so close to the shrine indicates the challenges faced by Iraq's security forces in securing huge religious gatherings.

"Those behind the attacks, they've become more determined now and see more of an opportunity because of the dysfunctional political process," said Salman Shaikh, director of the Brookings Doha Center and an analyst on regional politics.

The government is now split on mostly sectarian lines and over what critics say are al-Maliki's increasingly authoritarian tendencies. Sunni and Kurdish politicians say he is trying to increase his power at their communities' expense. While the wholesale violence between Sunni and Shiite neighborhoods and villages that killed tens of thousands in 2006 and 2007 has all but disappeared, the political tension has fostered a growing sense of pessimism.

"It's a fairly bleak picture right now," Shaikh said. He added, "This is quite depressing, considering we are approaching a decade since the initial invasion into Iraq."

The U.S. hailed the invasion it led in 2003 to topple Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein over his suspected weapons of mass destruction program as an opportunity to set up a model democracy in the Middle

East. The U.S. troops left an elected government behind when they withdrew, but it still cannot provide basic services like reliable electricity.

Saturday's bombings highlighted the relative weakness of Iraq's security forces, unable to stop the attacks despite throwing up roadblocks, banning motorcycles and putting tens and thousands of police and soldiers around the city. After the explosions came grumblings that those measures were insufficient.

"There is no real security, no real searches," said Mohamed Ali, who witnessed the first bombing in Shula, where authorities a few hours later were towing away the burned remains of a car. "Today is an exceptional day all security forces must be on high alert."

The first car bomb went off just after noon, hidden in a taxi parked among a group of other cabs along the procession route. It killed 14 people including two policemen and wounding 46 others, a police official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

An hour later, a second parked car exploded in the Kazimiyah neighborhood itself, about five kilometers (three miles) from the al-Kadhim mosque. At least 12 people were killed and 26 were wounded, the police official said.

It was unclear how the car had penetrated the tight ring of security thrown up around Kazimiyah after Wednesday's multiple bombings. Police and soldiers had been searching vehicles and people at checkpoints leading into the neighborhood for days.

Despite the latest violence, Saturday's commemorations for al-Kadhim continued. The crowds swayed and sang along with music played over the mosque's loudspeakers and bands of men formed circles to dance and wail, throwing their hands in the air as they cried out for the imam. On the sidelines, people used hoses to spray water on the crowds to relieve summer heat that reached 47 degrees Celsius (117 degrees Fahrenheit).

"The terrorists will not discourage us," vowed a song played over the mosque loudspeakers, promising to keep the centuries-old pilgrimage alive "even if they cut off our bodies into pieces."

The mosque opened its doors to the pilgrims on Saturday's final day of the commemoration, allowing them to enter and pray at al-Kadhim's shrine before filing out of another exit.

In 2005, the al-Kadhim procession was struck by another tragedy when thousands of Shiite pilgrims panicked by rumors of a suicide bomber broke into a stampede on a bridge, leaving some 1,000 of them dead. Police later said no explosives were found on the bridge, and poor crowd control and the climate of fear in Iraq appeared largely to blame.

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18. [Attack, Iraq] Bomb Kills Security Contractor In Iraq's North

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/bomb-kills-security-contractor-1459410.html>

A provincial police officer in Iraq says a roadside bomb has killed one security contractor and wounded three others working for a Turkish security company in the country's north.

Col. Badkar Shokur says the bomb exploded Sunday morning as a two-vehicle convoy was traveling in the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, 290 kilometers (180 miles) north of Baghdad

Shokur says the four victims were Iraqis working for a Turkish company providing security for a Turkish construction project.

Security contractors are among the favorite targets for al-Qaida-linked insurgents who seek to undermine government efforts to attract foreign companies to Iraq help in post-war reconstruction.

Six months after the withdrawal of the last American troops, Iraq's divided government is struggling to provide security and basic services such as electricity.



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19. [Attack, Yemen] South Yemen Army General Assassinated In Suicide Bomb Attack

Monday, June 18 2012

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/06/18/221265.html>

The commander of Yemen's southern military region was killed in a suicide attack in Aden early on Monday, medics and a security official said, after the army drove al-Qaeda-linked militants from their strongholds in the area. The bomber, who was wearing an explosives belt, targeted Major General Salem Ali Qatan as he was on his way to work, witnesses said.

"General Qatan was killed and four others were wounded in a suicide attack," near his home in the Mansoura neighborhood of Aden, the medic said on condition of anonymity.

As the chief military commander in south Yemen, Qatan had led a month-long offensive against al-Qaeda. Yemeni forces launched the offensive on May 12 aimed at reclaiming towns and cities lost to al-Qaeda over the past year, including Abyan's capital Zinjibar and the nearby town of Jaar.

The army has been trying to retake towns that were seized by militants last year during a popular uprising against President Ali Abdullah Saleh who formally stepped down in February. Qatan was appointed in March just days after newly elected President Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi took office and pledged to destroy al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the name given to the militant group's local Yemen branch.

The post had been held for decades by General Mahdi Maqola, known for his close ties to former president Saleh.

Saleh was accused by his opponents of allowing al-Qaeda to establish a stronghold in Yemen's mostly lawless south and east.

Qatan's appointment was in line with the Gulf sponsored power-transition deal that saw Saleh quit after 33 years in power, and required Hadi to restructure the Yemeni army during a two-year interim period.

Ali Mansour, a senior army commander and close aide to Qatan described the general's death as "a huge loss for Yemen and its efforts to fight al-Qaeda."

Speaking to AFP news agency by phone, Mansour said the attack "bears the hallmark of al-Qaeda," though the militant group have not formally claimed responsibility for his death.

He gave Qatan full credit for the recent Yemen army's victories against Al-Qaeda in both Abyan and Shabwa.

"In just three months, Qatan achieved major progress towards chasing down and eliminating" the militants from their strongholds, said Mansour.

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20. [Trend, Syria] Civilians Martyred In Busra Al-Sham, Others Injured In Damascus And Aleppo, Authorities Raid Terrorist Hideouts

Friday, June 15 2012

<http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2012/06/15/425632.htm>

An armed terrorist group detonated two explosive devices outside Khaled bin al-Walid Mosque in Busra al-Sham in Daraa countryside.

SANA correspondent quoted a source in the governorate as saying that a number of citizens were martyred and several others injured in the blast.

The competent authorities arrested on Thursday terrorist Mohammad Houssam al-Sadaki, from al-Qaeda- Jabhat al-Nasra- who was planning to blow himself up inside al-Rifae Mosque in Damascus during Friday prayers.

11 Civilians Injured in Explosive Device Blasts in Damascus and Aleppo

Nine civilians and members of the military engineering units were injured on Friday in the blast of an improvised explosive device planted by an armed terrorist group in al-Qa'a region behind al-Majed Mosque in al-Midan neighborhood in Damascus.

A source in the province told SANA reporter that the military engineering units dismantled two explosive devices planted in electrical inspection cases in the same region when a third one exploded while they were trying to dismantle it, causing the injury of nine civilians and military members, three of whom are in critical condition.

The source said that the weight of each device was estimated at 7 kg.

In Aleppo, two civilians were injured in a blast of an explosive device planted by an armed terrorist group near Dar al-Shifaa in al-Shaar neighborhood in Aleppo.

SANA reporter said that the explosive device was planted in a waste container.

Also, six civilians and three law-enforcement members were injured when an explosive device, planted by an armed terrorist group near Saad Bin Abi Wakkas Mosque in Salaheddin neighborhood in Aleppo, went off, causing material damage.

Five Law-Enforcement Personnel Injured in Explosive Device Blast in Hama

Five members of law-enforcement forces, one of them a First Lieutenant, were injured when an explosive device was detonated near al-Jawwash roundabout in Hama.

A source in the province told SANA's correspondent that terrorists detonated an explosive device remotely while a law-enforcement patrol was passing near the roundabout, injuring First Lieutenant Wissam Issa along with officers Mohammad Riyad, Mohammad Bakri, Hasan Mofleh, and Bassel Kjfaja.

The injured men were rushed to Hama National Hospital.

Factory for Manufacturing Explosive Devices and Handmade Rockets Discovered in Aleppo

The authorities discovered a factory for manufacturing explosive devices and hand-made rockets on a farm that terrorists used as a hideout in Tal Jbein north of Aleppo.

SANA correspondent quoted a source in the governorate as saying that chemical materials used for manufacturing explosives and rockets and a big quantity of explosive devices were seized. Books teaching the salafi doctrine and CDs, cameras, night vision binoculars and hand-made rockets were also seized.

Terrorists Attack Oil Pipeline in Deir Ezzor

Terrorists attacked an oil pipeline near Abu Hamam area in Deir Ezzor province on Friday evening using an explosive device, causing a fire to break.

An official source at the Petroleum Ministry told SANA that the targeted pipeline is 12 inches in diameter and transports crude oil from al-Tanak field to T2 station, adding that pumping operations were suspended upon the explosion and that teams will begin work to repair the pipeline and restore pumping operations within a few days.

Authorities Raid Terrorist Hideout in al-Qseir, Kill a Number of Terrorists

The authorities raided a terrorist hideout in al-Qseir town in Homs countryside, killing a number of terrorists and injuring several others.

A source in the governorate said that the authorities destroyed two pickup trucks that the terrorists used in attacking civilians and law-enforcement members and confiscated assorted weapons.

Earlier on Thursday evening, authorities in Tel Kalakh area confiscated weapons that were transported in a Kia car that was heading al-Hosn village from Lebanon. Confiscated weapons include RPG launchers and rounds and AK-47 with magazines and ammo.

Security Personnel at al-Jafra Oil Field Repel Terrorist Attack

The personnel in charge of the security of al-Jafra oil field in Deir Ezzor managed to repel an attack by an armed terrorist group on Friday.

A source in the province told SANA's correspondent that the incident resulted in the killing or injuring of the majority of terrorist, and that five terrorists were arrested and their weapons were confiscated.

Authorities Raid Terrorist Hideouts in Douma

Based on information provided by locals and investigations, the authorities raided a number of terrorist hideouts in Douma and its outskirts.

An official source at the province told SANA's correspondent that the operations resulted in the death of three terrorists, with a large number of terrorist being injured and others arrested.

The source added that the authorities also arrested a terrorist while purchasing ammunition.

Authorities Clash with Terrorist Group that Attacked Law-Enforcement Checkpoint in Daraa's Eastern Countryside

The authorities clashed with an armed terrorist group that attacked a law-enforcement checkpoint in Daraa's eastern countryside, resulting in the deaths of three terrorists and the injuring of others.

The authorities confiscated the terrorists' weapons along with eight explosive devices rigged for detonation which were concealed in a stolen car the terrorists had been using.

Authorities Confiscate Weapons in al-Haffeh, Lattakia

The authorities confiscated weapons in al-Heffeh area in Lattakia countryside which had been used by terrorists in their attacks on civilians, law-enforcement forces and public and private facilities.

The confiscated weapons include various portable rockets, RPG launchers with rounds, assault rifles, and ammo, in addition to night-vision goggles, advanced communication devices, and materials used for manufacturing explosives.

While pursuing fleeing terrorists in the fields and wilderness surrounding al-Haffeh, the authorities also found tunnels and vaults which the terrorists had been using and confiscated weapons hidden in them, including RPG launchers and rounds and assorted ammo.

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21. [Security, Syria] Qaeda Mosque Bomb Plot Foiled

Friday, June 15 2012

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-54426-Syria-says-it-uncovered-Qaeda-mosque-bomb-plot-->

Syrian authorities have uncovered an Al-Qaeda plot to bomb Damascus mosques around the main weekly prayers, state media reported on Friday.

A suspect detained on Thursday confessed that he had been planning a suicide bombing during Friday prayers at the Al-Rifai Mosque in the heart of the capital, the official SANA news agency reported.

"The authorities on Thursday arrested the terrorist Mohamed Hossam al-Saddaqa, a member of the Al-Nusra Front of Al-Qaeda, who was planning to blow himself up inside Al-Rifai Mosque in Damascus during Friday prayers," SANA said.

Saddaqa told his captors the group's members "have prepared young men ... to carry out suicide bombings in several areas in Damascus during prayers on Friday, June 15," SANA said. "There are other suicide bombers planning attacks on a number of mosques in Damascus during Friday prayers," it quoted him as saying.

The Nusra Front, unknown before the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's regime erupted in March last year, has claimed several attacks against security force targets in Damascus and other cities in recent months.

On Thursday, 14 people were wounded when a suicide bomber blew up a vehicle near an important Shiite Muslim shrine in the capital. The regime has attributed the unrest in Syria to "armed terrorist groups" seeking to sow chaos in the country as part of a "conspiracy" supported by foreign powers.

At least 14,400 people have been killed since the start of the uprising, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

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22. [Security, Syria] Authorities Seize Large Amounts Of Weapons In Al-Haffeh

Thursday, June 14 2012

<http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2012/06/14/425472.htm>

Authorities seized on Thursday large amounts of weapons in al-Haffeh district in Lattakia countryside.

A source at the province said that the seized weapons include boxes of ammunition for machineguns, 36 Russian rifles, 48 RPG launchers, 33 sniper rifles, mortars, a reconnaissance aircraft and a field hospital.

The authorities also seized advanced communication devices, IDs, maps, military suits and explosive devices.

Engineer Jaber al-Assi, Head of the Electricity Department in al-Haffeh, said that the vandalism acts of terrorists targeted the electricity departments in the city and smashed their contents, adding that work is underway to fix the breakdowns.

He said that the losses are estimated in the millions of Syrian pounds.

8 Explosive Devices Dismantled in Aleppo, Terrorists Arrested, Killed and Wounded in Idleb

The military engineering units dismantled 8 explosive devices planted by the armed terrorist groups on Khan al-Asal road which lead to the Police Academy, near Prophet Yousef Mosque, in Aleppo.

A source in the province told SANA reporter that the weight of the explosive devices, which were ready for remote detonation, ranged between 15 to 40 kg.

Authorities Arrest, Kill and Wound Terrorists in Idleb

Authorities in Idleb clashed with an armed terrorist group that committed sabotage acts and planted explosive devices killing and wounding a number of terrorists.

In the same context, the authorities on Wednesday evening stormed a hideout of a terrorist group in a farm near Idleb city and clashed with it killing all of its members.

In Jabal al-Zawiyeh in the countryside of Idleb, the authorities clashed with an armed terrorist group which attacked the law-enforcement forces in Deir Sunbul and killed its members.

The authorities also clashed with an armed terrorist group which terrified locals in Harem area, arresting two of them, killing and wounding others.

14 Citizens Involved in Recent Events Turn Themselves In

14 citizens who were misled and got involved in the recent events in the country and whose hands are clear of the Syrian blood handed themselves and their weapons in to the authorities in Homs and Damascus Countryside on Thursday.

The citizens were released to go back to normal life after pledging not to take up arms again or take part in vandalizing public and private properties.

Authorities Storm Dens of Armed Terrorist Groups in Douma, Kill and Arrest Several Terrorists

In cooperation with the residents and after investigations, authorities stormed dens of armed terrorist groups in Douma city in Damascus Countryside.

A source in the province told SANA reporter that clashes between the authorities and the armed terrorist groups resulted in killing and wounding many terrorists and arresting others and seizing their weapons.

The source added that the clashes also led to the martyrdom of three authorities' members and wounding others.

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23. [Attack, Yemen] Car Bomb Kills Three Yemeni Police

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/43730-car-bomb-kills-three-yemeni-police>

A bomb planted in the car of a southern Yemeni police officer killed him and his two bodyguards on Sunday, and wounded four other policemen, a security official said.

"A bomb exploded in the car of Major Ahmed al-Harmali, the police chief in the town of Rawkab," east of Mukalla in Hadramawt province, said the official, adding that "he was killed along with two of his bodyguards."

"Four others sustained minor wounds," he said, requesting anonymity.

The official said the attack appeared to be the work of Al-Qaida which is active in southern Yemen, although it was dealt severe blows this week after troops drove the jihadists out of three cities in neighboring Abyan province.

"The Al-Qaida organization is very active in Hadramawt and is usually behind such attacks on police and intelligence officers," he said.



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24. [Security, Syria] Armed Terrorist Group Thwarted From Infiltrating Syria From Lebanon

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/43721-sana-armed-terrorist-group-thwarted-from-infiltrating-syria-from-lebanon>

Syrian authorities on Saturday succeeded in thwarting an armed terrorist group from infiltrating Syria from Lebanon, reported Syrian Arab News Agency, SANA on Sunday.

They said that the armed group was attempting to enter the Syrian region of Tall Kalakh and that all of its members have been killed, said SANA.

In addition, Syrian authorities also thwarted a similar infiltration on Friday night whereby armed terrorist groups were trying to enter Reef Homs from Lebanon.

A source from the region said that a clash erupted between concerned authorities in Syria and the armed group as they were trying to enter Homs.

“They killed six of the terrorists and wounded four in Reef Qusayr while the rest managed to make it back to Lebanon,” stated the source.

It added that the concerned authorities thwarted infiltrations from Lebanon into Syria in the areas of Halat and al-Arida.

“Clashes ensued between them and some terrorists fled back to Lebanon where ambulances helped transport the wounded into Lebanese territory,” they continued.



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25. [Attack, Iraq] Bomber Attacks Funeral

Tuesday, June 19 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/world/middleeast/iraq-bomber-attacks-funeral.html?_r=1&smid=tw-nytimesworld&seid=auto

A man wearing an explosives belt detonated it amid a group of Shiite mourners at a funeral in Diyala Province on Monday, killing at least 15 people and wounding more than 40, according to security officials. The attack came after days of strikes against mostly Shiite targets in a stepped-up campaign of sectarian violence carried out by the Sunni insurgent group Al Qaeda in Iraq. Over the past week nearly 150 Iraqis have been killed in attacks. Violence, largely sectarian in nature, has substantially increased after a period of relative calm following the withdrawal of the American military in December. The rising violence coincides with a political struggle involving Iraq's three main factions — the Shiite majority, which controls the government, and the minority Kurds and Sunnis, who have called for a vote of no confidence against Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki.

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26. [Attack, Iraq] Car Bomb Wounds Iraqi Judge, Kills Two

Wednesday, June 20 2012

<http://www.france24.com/en/20120620-car-bomb-wounds-iraqi-judge-kills-two-officials>

A car bomb on Wednesday in the north Iraq city of Kirkuk exploded as a judge's car was passing, wounding him and nine others and leaving two people dead, security and medical officials said.

The bomb exploded as Judge Aziz Abdullah of the Kirkuk criminal court was driving near the Kirkuk Palace hotel in the centre of the city, police Brigadier General Sarhad Qader said.

Qader, who put the toll at two dead and a total of 10 wounded, said the judge was in a stable condition.

Dr Mohammed Abdullah of Kirkuk General Hospital meanwhile put the toll at two dead and 12 wounded.

Details of those killed and others wounded in the attack were not immediately available.

Also on Wednesday, unknown gunmen using silenced weapons shot dead a female lawyer in her car north of Baghdad, an interior ministry official said.

The latest killings bring to at least 142 the number of people killed in attacks in Iraq since June 13 -- more than were killed in all of May, according to official figures.

Violence in Iraq has declined dramatically since its peak in 2006-2007, but attacks remain common. A total of 132 Iraqis were killed in violence in May, according to official figures.



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27. [Attack, Syria] Bombs Hit Cars Escorting ANSA Correspondent, One Dies

Wednesday, June 20 2012

<http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/syria/2012/06/20/Syria-Bombs-hit-cars-escorting-ANSA-correspondent-one-dies-2-7067291.html>

The first bomb - probably a handmade bomb - exploded right against the first police car, a Opel Omega, which was immediately enveloped in a thick white cloud. The car carrying the ANSA correspondent was only a few tenths of meters away; when he understood the danger, the driver drove off the road and ended up in a olive-tree field.

Although a fragment hit the wind shield and completely cracked it, the glass did not crash. Another bomb exploded soon thereafter and hit the third car closing the car column, which was carrying security guards in civilian clothes armed with Kalashnikov. No one died in the second blast. Security guards and an ambulance immediately arrived on the spot. The police car was seriously damaged but not totally destroyed; the injuries on the dead policeman's body seem to suggest that the bomb was simply a container filled with pieces of iron.

According to the military who arrived on the spot, one of the three injured policemen lost his legs. The car column had just got out of the city of Daraa and was heading back to the capital, Damascus. The situation is extremely tense in Daraa and some streets are patrolled by Syrian military forces; it is impossible to pass by these streets because they are under the fire of rebel snipers.

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28. [Attack, Iraq] Baghdad Market Bombs Kill 14, Wound 100

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/baghdad-market-bombs-kill-14-wound-100-20120622-20u7w.html>

Two bombs have torn through a market full of shoppers in Baghdad, killing 14 people and wounding more than 100, the latest attack in Iraq's deadliest month since US troops withdrew at the end of last year. The explosions, timed within minutes of each other, came at midmorning on Friday in the open-air market in the mostly Shi'ite Muslim neighbourhood of Husseiniyah in the northeast part of Baghdad.

The bloodshed highlights the struggle the Iraqi leadership and security forces face in defeating al-Qaeda-linked insurgents hoping to destabilise the government and stoke tensions between Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim communities. The government itself is deadlocked over sectarian-tinged political conflicts.

Mohammed Hussein al-Jizani said he was haggling with customers in his shoe store in the open-air market, where stalls line the streets, when he heard a loud blast and ran outside.

"Three minutes later, there was a second explosion as people and policemen were rushing to the site of the first bomb," al-Jizani said. "The evil insurgents chose the best time to attack, because the market is usually busy on Fridays with young people gathering to sell and buy birds." There is a pet market nearby.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. The blasts killed at least 14 people and wounded 106, a medical official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to release the information.

More than 150 Iraqis have been killed this month in bombings and shootings that have mostly targeted Shi'ite Muslims and government security forces. It has been the deadliest month since the last American troops withdrew six months ago. Two other attacks on Friday killed four Iraqis.

In the city of Samarra, 100 kilometres north of Baghdad, officials said a bomb exploded in a car parked near the entrance of the Shi'ite al-Askari shrine, killing one pilgrim and injuring 13 other people. The shrine was the site of a huge explosion in February 2006 that sheared off its golden dome and immediately ignited fierce sectarian fighting between Sunnis and Shi'ites across Iraq.

Also, gunmen opened fire on a police checkpoint in western Baghdad, killing three officers, a police official said.

Officials and experts fear the surge in violence may signal Iraq's descent into a failed state, despite billions of dollars in foreign aid and years of security assistance from US troops.

While violence is nowhere as widespread as it was just five years ago, when multiple sectarian killings threatened to push the country into civil war, deadly bombings and shootings still happen around the country nearly every day.

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29. [Attack, Italy] Bomb Damages Tax Office In Southern Italy

Saturday, June 16 2012

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-italy-bombbre85f03x-20120616,0,1509618.story>

A homemade bomb exploded in front of the main tax collection office of a southern Italian town on Saturday, police said, the latest in a string of attacks against tax authorities in the country.

The overnight explosion in Lamezia Terme caused no injuries but shattered a window and damaged the entrance to the building, a police spokesman said. No claim of responsibility has been made.

Three explosive devices blew up outside the Naples offices of a state agency that collects overdue taxes and fines in January, and two letter bombs were sent to the same agency's offices in Rome in December.

One of the letter bombs was intercepted, but the other blew off part of a finger of the agency's director general.

An anarchist group said it had carried out the Rome attacks, and police in central Italy made more than 40 arrests last week for the attacks, including the letter bombs.

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30. [Trend, Ireland] Five-Year-Old Loses Fingers After Wicklow Device Explodes

Wednesday, June 20 2012

<http://www.newstalk.ie/2012/news/5-year-old-loses-fingers-after-wicklow-device-explodes/>

A little boy who picked up an explosive device outside his house in Co. Wicklow this morning has lost a number of his fingers as a result of the incident.

The device had been left outside the child's house at Sycamore Drive in Newtownmountkennedy when he picked it up at about 8am this morning.

Experts are trying to establish whether the device was a pipe-bomb.

Gardai have interviewed a number of people in relation to the incident.

Ken Foye is Crime Correspondent with the Evening Herald newspaper.

He says the 5-year-old has undergone surgery at Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Dublin.

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31. [Security, Sweden] After Find, Sweden Boosts Security At Nuclear Sites

Friday, June 22 2012

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/nation_world/159966025.html

Sweden ramped up security at its three nuclear power plants Thursday after a small amount of explosives without a triggering device was found on a forklift on the grounds of the country's largest atomic power station, authorities said. Police were investigating possible sabotage, but insisted that even if there had been a blast it would not have posed any great danger.

Bomb-sniffing dogs detected the explosives in a routine check Wednesday afternoon by security staff in the power plant's industrial area near its high-security enclosure. Police declined to describe the amount or type of explosive.

Bomb technicians said the material lacked a detonating device, meaning there was no danger of an imminent explosion.

"But even if it would have been equipped with a detonator, a potential blast would have had pretty limited effects - the truck would have received some damage and perhaps some passers-by would have been injured, but it wouldn't have harmed the plant in any way," police spokesman Tommy Nyman said.

Four nuclear reactors are at Ringhals, 45 miles south of Sweden's second-largest city, Goteborg, which has a population of 550,000. The plant is controlled by energy companies Vattenfall and E.ON.

Police said the driver of the forklift truck had been unaware of the explosives and was not suspected of being involved. Nyman said authorities had no suspects and were searching to see if there was more suspicious material.

The government declined to comment, saying it was a police matter.

Martina Kruger, head of the Climate and Energy Division at Greenpeace in the Nordic region, said that even though the explosive material lacked a detonator, the incident was serious, showing how vulnerable nuclear plants are to attacks.

"It doesn't matter if it was outside the protected area or not, it shouldn't have made itself within the premises at all," she said, accusing authorities and plant operators of playing down the incident.

Magnus Norell, a terrorism expert at the Swedish Defense Research Agency, said the incident unlikely was a planned attack. "They never got into the security area. . . .To me that indicates that it's not very professional." But he said that someone might have been testing the systems to "do something serious later on."

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32. [Attack, India] Two Hurt In Crude Bomb Attack In Old City Of UP

Sunday, June 17 2012

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-17/lucknow/32281270_1_crude-bomb-miscreants-night-patrol

Two persons received injuries when four miscreants hurled crude bomb on them after the residents objected to their suspicious movement on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday in the Old City area of Rifa Colony in Thakurganj police station area. The injured were identified as Babloo, son of Mohd Ramzaan and Pappu, both residents of Rifa Colony.

At Rifa Colony area, residents have been on night patrol for a long time, a provision adopted to keep the area safe from miscreants. It was under this arrangement that Babloo and Pappu along with a few others were on night patrol to ward off anti-social elements from the area.

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33. [Attack, Philippines] Soldier Killed In ComVal Roadside Blast

Saturday, June 16 2012

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/213577/soldier-killed-in-comval-roadside-blast>

A soldier was killed in a roadside bomb explosion allegedly perpetrated by communist New People's Army rebels in New Bataan town in Compostela Valley late Friday night.

Lieutenant Rodel Daguio died while being brought to a hospital shortly after their military truck was hit by improvised explosive device along the road in Barangay (village) Bantacan at around 11 p.m. Friday, said Major Rosa Manuel, a civil-military officer of the 10th Infantry Division.

Manuel said three other soldiers— Private First Class Richie Ursal, Staff Sergeant Arnold Pacino and Corporal Jaime Clara —were injured in the attack.

Manuel told the Philippine Daily Inquirer that the soldiers were on routine security patrol and were heading back to the 66th Infantry Brigade headquarters when the incident happened.

"It was an unexpected landmining because it was near vicinity of school and Iglesia ni Kristo church," Manuel said.

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34. [Attack, Philippines] Blast Hits Rubber Plantation In Basilan; One Injured

Friday, June 15 2012

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/regions/06/15/12/blast-hits-rubber-plantation-basilan-1-injured>

A landmine believed to have been planted by Abu Sayyaf extremists exploded at a rubber plantation in Maluso town, Basilan Thursday morning, injuring one worker.

The plantation was located near a military detachment and soldiers usually pass by the area.

"A plantation worker was reported injured in the explosion, which is believed meant for soldiers at a nearby detachment," said Lt. Col. Erwin Alea, commander of the 4th Civil Relations Group.

Alea said initial investigation revealed that the explosion, caused by a planted improvised explosive device, was the handiwork of Al-Qaeda linked Abu Sayyaf.

"Investigation further showed that the landmine was possibly intended for the troops assigned in a nearby detachment where soldiers usually pass by when doing patrol operations," Alea said.

"This kind of handiwork creates fear among the innocent civilians especially those working as rubber plantation workers. This is why your AFP calls for the support and cooperation of the public to be extra vigilant and watchful and to immediately report to proper authorities any suspicious or unusual happening to avoid same violent incident."

Clearing operations were immediately conducted in the area to search for more explosives.

An operation was also launched to capture the blast suspects.

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35. [Security, India] Maoist Plotting To Attack Western Odisha Soft Targets

Thursday, June 14 2012

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/maoist-plotting-to-attack-western-odisha-soft-targets-police/1011737.html>

Police today arrested two hardcore Maoists and claimed that they were part of ultras' plot to attack security camps in certain districts of Western Odisha. Bishram alias Sudhir Bhuiyan, 24 and Habil Horo, 23 belonging to the West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand and accused in several murder cases, were arrested from Saranda forest bordering Odisha and Jharkhand in the small hours today. Their interrogation revealed that the Maoists were planning to attack "soft targets" like security forces camps, training centres and the like in Western Odisha, DIG (Western Range) Yaswant Jethwa said. "We have sounded alert to RPF, CISF camps and other installations," Jethwa said adding that the forces have started joint operation in various areas to thwart any such incident. "As per the plan of the Maoists' Saranda platoon, about 100 cadres with help from other areas could strike any place in the region," he said. The arrest was vital as they revealed the Maoist plan on co-ordination among the cadres of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha to strengthen the sagging confidence of the outlawed organisation, Jethwa said. They were nabbed at around 2 AM at Lungra Ghati under K.Balang police station by a joint team of CRPF and the district volunteer force following a tip off. Bhuiyan and Horo were accused in the killing of Ajit Bardhan, a sub-inspector of police in 2009, and former woman Maoist Kandri Lohar and her four-year-old son last year. Lohar had left the CPI(Maoist) and joined the police as home guard.

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36. [Attack, Bangladesh] Two Cops Hurt In Jhenidah 'Bomb' Blast

Friday, June 22 2012

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=38573

Seven people including two detectives were injured in a homemade bomb blast in Moheshpur upazila of Jhenidah Thursday night.

The explosive went off when a team of Detective Branch of police was searching a house at Jadabpur village for phensidyl, police said.

The injured are Sub-Inspector Abdul Alim, constable Rashedul Islam, Enamul Haque, 10, Biplob Hossain, 13, Azibor Rahman, 14, Sagar Hossain, 16, and Saltu Mia, 15, reports our Jhenidah correspondent.

Of them, six have been admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital, while Biplob has been referred to Jessore Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

Being tipped off, around 8:30pm on Thursday, the detectives launched a drive at the house, said Sheikh Obaidullah, DB officer-in-charge (OC) in Jhenidah.

As the law enforcers pushed a carton, a bomb went off, leaving them injured.

Following the incident, other police officers rushed to the spot and brought the injured to the hospital.

The detectives seized 200 bottles of phensidyl from the house.

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37. [Attack, Vietnam] Fifteen Injured As Bomb Goes Off In Hanoi Failed Gold-Shop Heist

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/index/pages/20120621-a-dozen-injured-as-bomb-explodes-in-failed-gold-shop-heist.aspx>

A handmade bomb exploded during a botched attempt to rob a jewelry shop in Hanoi Thursday noon, injuring 15 people, including shop staff and passers-by.

The police have taken in a suspect, 25-year-old Ta Van Thanh, for attempted murder and robbery, Col Dao Thanh Hai, director of the Hanoi Criminal Police Department, told the media later that afternoon.

The police said Thanh entered Hoang Tin Gold Shop on Nguyen Thai Hoc Street with a bomb in a plastic bag, a knife, and a taser. He gave the shop owner, Vu Hai Duong, a piece of paper that said "I just need money, don't touch this bag."

Duong, pretending to ask Thanh how much money he needed, grabbed the bag and threw it out of his shop and shouted for help. Thanh fled immediately. As some employees of a cosmetics shop next door chased him, the bomb exploded. The blast broke the glass windows of a truck passing by, sending shards of glass into the face and left eye of the driver.

Fortunately for some passers-by, the vehicle shielded them from the blast, possibly saving their lives.

In the gold shop, all the glass windows and furniture on the first floor were badly damaged. A woman employee named Trinh Thi Dao and four female employees of the cosmetics shop were also injured.



Thanh, who attempted to escape through the roofs of neighboring houses, was arrested in an alley 20 minutes after the explosion. Tuoi Tre newspaper quoted Dr Nguyen Cong To, deputy director of St Paul Hospital in Hanoi, as saying that 15 people injured in the explosion were admitted to his hospital. Four of them was discharged the same day, while the others are being treated for head injuries and burns, he said. Most of them are temporarily deaf, he added.

Hai said Thanh, who is from Bac Giang Province, made the bomb out of four kilograms of explosives and an industrial detonator. Thanh told the police he attempted the robbery because of his desperate poverty.

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38. [Security, United States] Bomb Squad Removes Suspicious Device In Edgewater

Monday, June 18 2012

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/news/local/southeast-volusia/2012/06/18/bomb-squad-removes-suspicious-device-in-edgewater.html>

Members of the Volusia County sheriff's bomb squad removed and detonated a "suspicious device" found in an Edgewater subdivision Sunday afternoon.

"Wires and all kinds of (stuff) were coming out of it," said resident Matt Mesino, 60, who found the device by the edge of Needle Palm Drive in the Florida Shores subdivision. He made the find at 1:12 p.m. while doing yardwork at his residence.

A sheriff's robot was used to remove the device, said Edgewater Detective Matthew Snyder.

"It looked real enough that we called the bomb squad for a second opinion," Officer Brian Gintz said.

Mesino said the device was a 2-foot copper pipe with wires coming out of it, and either a battery or cellphone attached to the end of it.

Police closed Roberts Road (30th Street) between Mango Tree Drive and Orange Tree Drive, and Needle Palm between 29th and 31st streets for several hours. Two houses were evacuated.

Carry Michalowski and her 9-year-old daughter, Allyson, are visiting from North Carolina. They went to the beach in the morning and returned to the commotion. Allyson said she heard two bangs.

"I think they just exploded a bomb," she said.

Gintz said "the bangs" were made by the bomb squad as they made the device safe for transport. He wouldn't speculate what threat the device posed.

"We don't know what is inside of it," he said. "We don't know if there is any scrap metal in it or just what."

Once it's detonated, evidence will be collected, Gintz said.

Mesino said he thought the incident was "random."

"I don't know why anyone would target me," he said.

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39. [Security, United States] Explosive Device Removed From Plano Home

Tuesday, June 19 2012

<http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/Explosive-device-removed-from-Plano-home-159583625.html>

The FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Plano and Garland bomb teams spent Monday night and early Tuesday morning searching a home in the 3200 block of Anchor Drive in Plano.

At one point overnight, they removed an explosive device from the home and detonated it in Kaufman County.

Neighbors said three people left the home late Monday as investigators arrived and issued a search warrant. Police confirmed that the home is that of a man they suspect may have set off an explosive device near a natural gas line Monday over a mile away.

However, police will say the search is linked to that investigation.

The man was critically injured near the gas line explosion on West Parker Boulevard and remains hospitalized in critical condition. Police said they believe he intentionally set off an explosive device near the gas line and injured himself when it exploded.

Authorities said they do not believe the man's story that he was the victim of a hit-and-run crash.

Police said they are still searching for a motive for the explosion. They also want to know what type of an explosive device was used. The only clues the FBI found at the scene were pieces of shrapnel in the wooden fencing near the gas line.

Authorities said they are not commenting on other evidence taken from the home on Anchor Drive overnight. The FBI and police were seen leaving with boxes of items shortly before they left the neighborhood just before 4 a.m. Since then, an older couple returned to the home.

Neighbors said the family has lived there for years and is very nice. Neighbors also said the son who lives there is often out and about and doesn't seem to hold down a job. They said he typically carried a backpack with him.

One neighbor told News 8 the son seemed to change over the last couple of years. He said his neighbor started running at night, saying he "was in training." That same neighbor said the young man lived a minimalistic life, saying he was against modern technology, but would then talk about spending hours on his computer.

The FBI said the next step for the agency is to determine whether police or the FBI will be the lead agency in investigating this case.

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40. [Security, United States] Live Explosive Device Found In Carry-On Bag At Oregon Airport

Monday, June 18 2012

http://www.gsnmagazine.com/node/26571?c=airport_aviation_security

A live blasting cap was found by TSA baggage screeners in the carry-on luggage of a passenger at Roberts Field-Redmond Municipal Airport the week of June 11.

The devices, which are used to set off larger charges in TNT and other explosives in commercial mining, construction and demolition, are among the explosive components TSA said its officers are trained to find.

The passenger who was carrying the bag the device was in, was arrested by local law enforcement, said TSA “Blogger Bob” Burns on the agency’s Web site on June 15. Burns didn’t provide additional details on the arrest, however.

According to the airport’s Web site, Roberts Field-Redmond Municipal Airport is owned and operated by the City of Redmond for the surrounding area and is the fourth largest commercial service airport in Oregon. Commercial service at the facility is provided by Alaska Air, United, United Express and Delta Connection (through SkyWest Airlines); and Allegiant. Carriers offer approximately 46 arriving and departing flights daily with direct flights to Denver, Portland, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Burns also said that stun guns and regular loaded handguns continue to be discovered on passengers at airports nationwide. Another stun gun disguised as a cell phone was found at Indianapolis International Airport the week of June 11, as well as 10 other stun guns at checkpoints around the nation, including airports in Denver and San Francisco.

Burns said a total of nine illegal and prohibited items were found by body scanners at nine airports nationally during week, including a tube of toothpaste hidden in the waistband, as well as drugs. The discovery of those items in areas where explosives could be hidden shows the scanning technology was working to detect non-metallic items.

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41. [Security, Colombia] Santos Warns For Possible Increase In FARC Attacks

Sunday, June 17 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24635-santos-warns-for-increase-in-farc-attacks.html>

Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos on Saturday warned for a possible increase in attacks by guerrilla group FARC as response to a military offensive against the rebels.

"Possibly, while we are hitting them harder, we will see more terrorist attacks in the coming months," Santos said on a visit to the southwestern Colombian town of Buga.

According to Santos, the armed forces' permanent presence in areas traditionally controlled by the FARC has generated despair within the rebel ranks and explains recent rebel attacks on police and army that has killed dozens of members of the security forces in the past months.

"We're pulling them out of their dens ... this has generated a reaction of despair," the president said, adding that "terrorism has increased and possibly will continue to increase."

Santos said that, despite the guerrilla counter attacks, the armed forces "will continue [acting] with full force" and "hitting these groups where it hurts most."

Colombian guerrilla groups like the FARC and ELN have gradually stepped up hit-and-run attacks on Colombian armed forces since 2008 in response to a U.S.-backed counter-insurgency offensive under Santos predecessor Alvaro Uribe that pushed the rebels away from economically important areas.

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42. [Trend, Colombia] Bogota House Explosion Caused By 'FARC Member'

Friday, June 15 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24625-house-explosion-caused-by-farc-member-bogota-police.html>

A fatal blast at a house in Bogota Friday was caused by improper handling of explosives by an alleged FARC guerrilla, according to local authorities.

"What we have established from investigations at this time is that the man was preparing explosives and handled the explosives poorly which led to his death," said commander of the Bogota Metropolitan Police, General Luiz Eduardo Martinez.

The explosion killed the suspected guerrilla and wounded three others in the Alfonso Lopez neighborhood of southern Bogota. Officers also found 180 grams of the highly powerful explosive pentolite on the scene.

The officer said the explosives could be used in the manufacture of car bombs, such as the one used in the attack on former Minister Fernando Londoño last month. "This explosive would have been exploded by radio frequency and most likely put somewhere in the capital," said Martinez.

Martinez also denied rumors that police targeted the suspected FARC member and were loitering near the house prior to the explosion. "That is false. Authorities arrived at the site after the explosion happened. We had no prior knowledge that they were preparing bombs there," said the commander.

Authorities believe the suspected guerrilla was from the municipality of Algeciras, in the southwestern Huila department and belonged to the Teofilo Forero Castro Column of the FARC.

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43. [Security, Colombia] FARC War Material' Seized By Colombian Army

Friday, June 15 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24616-farc-war-material-seized-by-colombian-army.html>

A large stack of war material allegedly belonging to the rebel group FARC was seized on Friday by the army in southern Colombia, newspaper El Espectador reported.

The army said that 26 automatic rifles, 40 artisanal explosives, 12 hand grenades, four landmines and other combat materials were seized from a hideout in Puerto Asis, a municipality in the Putumayo department close to Colombia's border with Ecuador.

According to the army, the material was about to be distributed among the FARC fronts that operated in the area.

Puerto Asis is considered a strategic location for the FARC's 48th Front, which has been believed to operate on both sides of the border. Ecuadorian authorities have previously denounced the recruitment of Ecuadorian minors into this front.



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44. [Attack, Colombia] Roadside Bomb Kills Woman, Wounds Seven Police Officers In Colombia

Wednesday, June 20 2012

<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2012/06/20/roadside-bomb-kills-woman-wounds-7-police-officers-in-colombia/>

A woman died and seven police officers were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded as a police truck went down a street in Popayan, the capital of the southwestern Colombian province of Cauca, a police spokesman told Efe. The bomb was detonated around 1:20 p.m. Tuesday in Lomas de Granada, a neighborhood on the southern outskirts of Popayan, the police spokesman said.

The bomb apparently targeted the mobile police squad, or Esmad, truck passing through the neighborhood.

The woman killed by the blast lived in the neighborhood, the police spokesman said.

"The woman received a serious shock and suffered a heart attack," the police spokesman told Efe.

The blast shattered the windows of several nearby buildings and damaged vehicles. The wounded officers were taken to hospitals in Popayan for treatment of hearing damage and fractures.

The attack on the Esmad truck occurred a few hours after Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, guerrillas destroyed a portion of a bridge over the Ovejas River between Popayan and Cali on the Pan American Highway, forcing the road's closing for several hours. The rebels destroyed part of the bridge's structure, leaving a large crater in the roadbed.

Army and police bomb specialists inspected the area around the bridge and engineers examined an old bridge located nearby that was opened to traffic. The Colombian government has made fighting the FARC a top priority and has obtained billions in U.S. aid for counterinsurgency operations.

The FARC is on both the U.S. and EU lists of terrorist groups. Drug trafficking, extortion and kidnapping-for-ransom are the FARC's main means of financing its operations. The FARC has suffered a series of setbacks in recent years at the hands of the Colombian security forces.

Alfonso Cano, the FARC's top leader, was killed on Nov. 4 in a military and police operation that the government hailed as the biggest blow to the FARC in its nearly 50-year history.

Cano, a 63-year-old intellectual who had entered the ranks of the FARC 30 years ago, was killed in a remote area of the southwestern province of Cauca a few hours after fleeing a bombardment.

The FARC also suffered a series of blows in 2008, with the biggest coming in July of that year, when the Colombian army rescued a group of high-profile rebel-held captives: former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt, U.S. military contractors Thomas Howes, Keith Stansell and Marc Gonsalves, and 11 other Colombian police officers and soldiers.

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45. [Security, Colombia] FARC Smuggle Explosives Into Cities Via Ecuador Border

Monday, June 18 2012

<http://www.insightcrime.org/insight-latest-news/item/2784-farc-smuggle-explosives-into-cities-via-ecuador-border-police>

Colombian police have identified routes along the Ecuadorian border they say are used by the FARC to smuggle high-grade explosives into major Colombian cities.

According to La Hora, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is smuggling the military-grade explosive pentolite from Ecuador into the Colombian border city of Ipiales, from where it is moved northwards to bigger cities like Popayan, Cali, and Bogota. The shipments are hidden in parcels and carried by courier services, which have been placed under surveillance by the authorities. Colombian law enforcement has seized six shipments of pentolite in the past three months, police said.

The FARC often use pentolite for making bombs and carrying out urban attacks. Several explosive devices discovered near police stations in Bogota in the past week have contained pentolite. The substance was used in the bomb attack against former Interior Minister Fernando Londoño on May 15. On Friday, a presumed member of the FARC was killed in Bogota when the pentolite device he was building exploded, injuring three others.

InSight Crime Analysis

Unsurprisingly, the routes used by the FARC to move explosives appear to overlap with the 26 unsanctioned border crossings identified by the Ecuadorian Defense Ministry last week. Several of these illegal border crossings are only a few kilometers from Ipiales, which the Colombian national police indicate is a key transshipment point for explosives.

These announcements are likely the product of a meeting that took place between Ecuadorian and Colombian officials in Bogota in March, when both countries agreed to locate and identify illegal frontier crossings by May. Such cooperation to combat criminal organizations has been on the rise since relations between the Andean countries improved following Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos' inauguration.

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46. [Attack, Colombia] Grenade Attack In Southwestern Colombia Injures Nine

Tuesday, June 19 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24656-nine-people-injured-by-grenade-attack-in-southwestern-colombia.html>

Nine people, including seven minors, were injured Monday by a grenade attack in southwestern Colombia.

Authorities said the grenade was launched against an army checkpoint in the Pacific port city of Buenaventura by Colombia's largest rebel group the FARC.

One soldier and eight civilians, including seven minors, were injured by blast debris. Two of the minors received grave injuries and had to be hospitalized in a local clinic.

"The National Navy rejects and condemns the terrorist attack perpetrated by the FARC against the civilian population on Sunday night, violating the human rights and the fulfilling of the norms of International Humanitarian Law," said the navy colonel Gonzalo Aladino to newspaper El Pais.

Buenaventura, home of Colombia's largest port in the Pacific region, has long been plagued by violence as neo-paramilitary groups, criminal gangs and left-wing guerrillas struggle for control over strategic cocaine shipping routes.



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