



Weekly News Update

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09 December 2011

The RAPID Weekly News Update is a weekly collection of unclassified 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.trancite.com> using your government (.mil or .gov) email account.



Recently released images from Swedish security services, illustrating the device used in the December 2010 Stockholm bombing. This week, Swedish authorities laid out the findings of a twelve-month investigation into the attack. See "[New Details Emerge In Stockholm Case.](#)"

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Special Interest: US Mission To Nigeria Warns Of Potential Attack In Anuja, Nigeria
http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/emac_11052011.html
Monday, 05 December 2011

Emergency Message For American Citizens (November 05, 2011)

The U.S. Mission in Nigeria issues the following emergency message for the attention of all U.S. citizens in Abuja, Nigeria.

Following the recent Boko Haram, aka Nigerian Taliban, attacks in Borno and Yobe State, the U.S. Embassy has received information that Boko Haram may plan to attack several locations and hotels in Abuja, Nigeria, during the Sallah holiday. Potential targets may include the Nikon Luxury, the Sheraton Hotel, and the Transcorp Hilton Hotel.

All U.S. Government personnel have been instructed to avoid these locations, and previously scheduled events have been cancelled. American citizens should expect additional police and military checkpoints, additional security, and possible road blocks in Abuja for the foreseeable future.

The U.S. government has no additional information regarding the timing of the possible attacks.

The Embassy reminds U.S. citizens to exercise additional caution. Please maintain a high state of vigilance and personal awareness, particularly in and around Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, near Nigerian government facilities, diplomatic missions, large gathering places, hotels, markets and malls, and places of worship.

We advise all U.S. citizens to review their personal security plans, remain aware of their surroundings, including local events, monitor local news stations for updates, and report specific incidences of targeted violence to the U.S. Embassy in Abuja or the U. S. Consulate General in Lagos at the numbers below. U.S. citizens should maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to enhance their personal security. For additional information, please refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad.

U.S. citizens who travel to or reside in Nigeria are strongly advised to enroll through the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). U.S. citizens without Internet access may enroll directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By enrolling, you make it easier for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to contact you in case of emergency.

U.S. citizens should contact the U.S. Embassy in Abuja or the U.S. Consulate General in Lagos for up-to-date information on any restrictions. The U.S. Embassy in Abuja is open Monday - Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The U.S. Consulate General in Lagos is open Monday-Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The U.S. Embassy in Abuja can be reached by telephone, including after-hours emergencies, at +234(9) 461-4000. The U.S. Consulate General in Lagos can be reached by telephone, including after-hours emergencies at +234(1) 460-3600 or +234 (1) 460-3400.

Current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States or a regular toll line at-1-202-501-4444 for callers from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). You can also stay up to date by bookmarking our Bureau of Consular Affairs website, which contains the current Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts as well as the Worldwide Caution. Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well.

1. Boot Could Reduce IED Injuries
Wednesday, 07 December 2011
<http://news.sky.com/home/article/16125658>

New research into new boots aimed at better protecting British soldiers from the threat of roadside bombs in Afghanistan is being carried by scientists in the UK.

In the past five years, 347 troops have been killed in Afghanistan, but more than half of them - 198 - were the result of IEDs, improvised explosive devices.

Hundreds more lost arms and legs, often both, and its these casualties the new work is targeting.

In an £8m project scientists are using a purpose-built explosion simulator at London's Imperial College to recreate the trauma experienced when a bomb goes off.

They are using fake legs and real military boots to examine the forces that are exerted on a soldier's limbs in an IED strike.

The hope is that, by designing a new boot, they can better distribute the shock waves and save some of the more delicate parts of the foot which are difficult to reconstruct and thereby save the limb from amputation.

Captain Adam Hill, who is the deputy director of the Centre and an Army doctor, says: "There are "good" injuries and "bad" injuries.

"The aim of the research is to try and ensure there are more good injuries than bad in IED strikes."

The Blast Centre researchers say they are confident they will have a new more protective boot within the next 12 to 18 months.

They acknowledge, however, that is only just before UK combat operations are due to cease in Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

They insist the knowledge gained will be useful both militarily and in civilian spheres long after the Afghan campaign draws to a close.

The Royal British Legion is providing £5m of the funding because it believes it will pay off in the long term for their members who will have to live with the consequences of roadside bombs.

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2. Afghan Bombs Kill Seventy-Eight In Two Days

Wednesday, 07 December 2011

<http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wxxi/news.newsmain/article/0/0/1882950/World/Afghan.bombs.kill.78.in.two.days>

A roadside mine killed 19 civilians and injured another five when it exploded in the southern Afghan province of Helmand on Wednesday, the provincial government said.

The blast came a day after rare sectarian attacks in three Afghan cities killed 59 people, and refocused attention on the fragile Afghan security situation.

After Tuesday's attacks, the largest of which targeted a Shi'ite Muslim shrine in the capital Kabul, Afghan President Hamid Karzai cancelled a planned visit to Britain to return straight home, wiping out any residual optimism from an international conference about the future of Afghanistan, held on Monday in Germany.

Afghans have previously been spared the large-scale sectarian attacks that regularly trouble Iraq and neighboring Pakistan, but now face the grim prospect of a new type of bloodshed being added to the dangers of daily life.

"The reason for President Karzai's trip cancellation to Britain is the terrorist attacks on Ashura in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar which killed and wounded many participants," Karzai's office said in a statement.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), responsible for security across much of the country, says it is winning the war against the Taliban.

But if Tuesday's bombing sets a precedent for violence between the Sunni Muslim majority and the Shi'ite minority, it would severely stretch army and police resources.

At a funeral ceremony on Wednesday for victims of the attack, hundreds of Shi'ite Muslims bore aloft the bodies of the dead, chanting that because they had been killed at a Muslim ceremony, they had died in the name of the Prophet Mohammad.

"We were sacrificed for you," they shouted.

"Where is the government, where are the members of parliament? Why they don't join our mourning? It creates a gap between people and the government," said Mohammad, 40 years old, who said one his relatives died in the Kabul blast.

The interior ministry has blamed "the Taliban and terrorists", without giving further details, while the Taliban strongly condemned the bombings.

"We want the Afghan government, international community and those who are involved in Afghanistan's affairs to reveal those who were behind the attack," said Yazdan Parast, another Shi'ite Muslim attending the ceremony.

Some Shi'ite Muslims said immediately after the Kabul blast that police had not done enough to protect them. Hundreds of worshippers had gathered to mark the festival of Ashura at a shrine in central Kabul when a suicide bomber struck.

Among those killed in Tuesday's attacks was a U.S. citizen the American embassy in Kabul said in a statement. It gave no further details.

At the German conference, the Afghan government's Western backers, who have spent billions of dollars on the country since the U.S.-led overthrow of the Taliban government in 2001, pledged to support the country beyond the end-2014 deadline for the withdrawal of foreign combat troops.

Afghanistan has said that it will not be able to afford the army and police force it needs after 2014 without international help, and Tuesday's attack is likely to reinforce fears about the ability of Afghan forces to cope with violence after ISAF has fully handed over security.

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3. Bomb Kills Nineteen In South

Wednesday, 07 December 2011

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2101725,00.html>

A minibus struck a roadside bomb while driving in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday, triggering an explosion that killed 19 Afghan civilians, officials said.

The vehicle was driving on a road in Helmand province's volatile Sangin district — a Taliban stronghold — when it hit the bomb, said Daoud Ahmadi, a spokesman for the Helmand government. (See pictures of Afghanistan's dangerous Korengal Valley.)

At least five children were among the dead, he said. Another six people were wounded and all were being treated at a NATO base. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack — a common situation when bombs kill civilians.

The blast comes a day after twin bombings on Shiite Muslims celebrating the holiday of Ashoura left 60 dead and sparked fears that attacks in Afghanistan might be taking on a sectarian dimension for the first time. Ashoura honors the death of Imam Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in 680 A.D.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai cut short a European trip because of Tuesday's attacks and returned to Kabul on Wednesday to visit the scores of wounded and the bereaved families of those killed in the capital.

A suicide bomber slaughtered 56 Shiite worshippers and wounded more than 160 others Tuesday outside a shrine where hundreds had gathered to worship. One U.S. citizen was also among the dead, according to a statement issued by the American embassy in Kabul. The deceased was not a government employee, U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Megan Ellis said, but declined to give further details.

The blast, coupled with another smaller explosion in a northern city that killed four people in a holiday vehicle procession, marked the first major assault on a Muslim sect in Afghanistan in recent memory.

Karzai said in a statement shortly after the blast that the attack on Shiites was unprecedented in scope and marked the first time that one had been carried out during a religious event.

His office said Wednesday that he had arrived back in Kabul, cutting short a trip to Britain and Germany, and planned to spend the day visiting the wounded in city hospitals.

Families gathered for funerals across the city on Wednesday. In western Kabul, a group of mourners carried four bodies in a funeral procession through the city's largest Shiite cemetery. They carried pictures of the dead and shouted, "They are martyrs! We honor them!"

One of the mourners said no place felt safe anymore.

"Killing Muslims in front of a holy shrine, it is unbelievable," said Mohammad Nahim, 35. "Last night I told my children not to visit any shrines after dark. It is too dangerous." He said the graphic images of piled bodies came on the television as his family was eating dinner the night before and they all started crying.

"The man who owned the shop on my street corner, the man I bought vegetables from, he was killed in the attack," Nahim said.

At one of the funerals, a member of the city's Shiite council said the attack showed no one can count on the government for protection. "There have been so many attacks, even against government officials, and still they can't stop these things," said Mohaqeq Zada.

It remained unclear what the political reverberations of the attack could be.

The Taliban condemned the attack, which was reminiscent of the wave of sectarian bloodshed that shook Iraq during the height of the war there. Suspicion centered on militant groups based in neighboring Pakistan, where Sunni attacks on minority Shiites are common.

A man who claimed to be from Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami, a Pakistan-based group that has carried out attacks against Shiite Muslims, called various media outlets in Pakistan to claim responsibility for the bombing in Kabul. The validity of the claim could not be determined.

Until now, the decade-long Afghan war has largely been spared sectarian violence, where civilians are targeted simply for their membership in a particular religious group. Tuesday's attack suggests that at least some militant groups may have shifted tactics, taking aim at ethnic minorities such as the Hazara who are largely Shiite and support the Afghan government and its Western partners.

Afghanistan's Shiite community makes up about 20 percent of the nation's 30 million population. Hard-line Sunnis consider Shiites nonbelievers because their customs and traditions differ from the majority sect.

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4. Suicide Bomber Kills Scores In Attack At Kabul Mosque

Tuesday, 06 December 2011

http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2011/12/suicide_bomber_kills_61.php

A suicide bomber killed more than 50 Shia worshippers outside a mosque in the Afghan capital of Kabul today. Another suicide bomber killed four more Shia in the western city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

The Kabul suicide bomber waded into a crowd of Afghans outside the Abul Fazl shrine near the Presidential Palace and detonated his vest. The attack took place around noon Afghan time, while a large crowd of Shia gathered to observe the religious rites of Ashura.

Afghan officials said that 54 people were killed and more than 160 were wounded in the Kabul attack. The death toll may rise as several of Shia worshippers were badly wounded.

In Mazar-i-Sharif, a bicycle laden with explosives was detonated near the city's main mosque, killing four Afghans and wounding at least 17 more.

A Pakistani terror group known as the Lashkar-e-Jhanghvi al Almi, an offshoot of the anti-Shai Lashkar-e-Jhanghvi, has claimed responsibility for the suicide attack in Kabul. The claim was not confirmed, and the Taliban have denied executing the attack. Lashkar-e-Jhanghvi al Almi has claimed credit for suicide attacks in Pakistan, and also kidnapped and executed Colonel Imam, the Pakistani military intelligence officer who was called the godfather of the Taliban. The group is allied with al Qaeda and the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan.

The Taliban, the Haqqani Network, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, al Qaeda, and a host of smaller, affiliated terror groups have also carried out suicide attacks in Afghanistan.

Today's attack in the Kabul is the first suicide bombing in the capital since Oct. 29, when a bomber hit an up-armored bus carrying NATO personnel to an Afghan military training facility. Seventeen US and NATO soldiers and civilians were killed in the attack.

The Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and other allied terror groups have conducted the attacks in the area by pooling resources into what is known as the Kabul Attack Network. The network is made up of fighters from the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and Hizb-i-Islami Gulbuddin, and cooperates with terror groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and al Qaeda. Top Afghan intelligence officials have linked the Kabul Attack Network to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence directorate as well. The network's tentacles extend outward from Kabul into the surrounding provinces of Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Kapisa, Ghazni, and Zabul, a US intelligence official told The Long War Journal.

The Kabul Attack Network has averaged about one major, high-profile attack in the capital this year. But today's targeting of Shia does not fit the profile of other attacks, which have focused on US, NATO, and Afghan personnel and bases, as well as areas such as hotels where Westerners and Afghan officials congregate.

The Taliban have carried out numerous attacks at mosques in the past, including the assassination of Kunduz's governor in the province of Takhar on Oct. 8, 2010, and more recently, a suicide bombing that killed seven people, including a local police commander, in an attack at a mosque in the northern Afghan province of Baghlan on Nov. 6.

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The attacks that targeted civilians in Kabul and Marzar-i-Sharif have occurred after Taliban emir Mullah Omar recently released several statements voicing concern over the perception that the Taliban were killing civilians in "martyrdom attacks and other operations." Omar, in an Eid statement published on the Taliban's Voice of Jihad propaganda website, called on provincial shadow governors to create mechanisms to investigate claims of civilian casualties and punish those guilty.

Omar's statement also advised that civilians should stay away from American forces to avoid being killed in attacks.

"The common folk must also facilitate Mujahideen in averting civilian losses and sufferings," the statement said. "They should avoid moving in close proximity to Americans that patrol in villages and countryside and should actively put to practice the precautionary measures announced by Mujahideen so no harm will reach them during the impending attacks of the invaders."

Although the Taliban have publicly claimed they seek to limit civilian casualties, a secret directive issued by Mullah Omar last year shows that the Taliban have no qualms about attacking civilians, including women, who cooperate with the Afghan government or Coalition forces.

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5. Four Killed In Afghan Mazar-i-Sharif Bomb Blast
Tuesday, 06 December 2011
<http://www.jpost.com/Headlines/Article.aspx?id=248302>

Four people were killed, including one Afghan soldier, when a bomb exploded in the Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif on Tuesday, a district police official said.

The bomb, which was carried on a bicycle, exploded near a mosque. Also on Tuesday, a suicide bomber attacked a Shi'ite Muslim shrine in central Kabul.

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6. Fatal Suicide Attack Outside US Base In Logar Province

Friday, 02 December 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/03/world/asia/car-bomb-explodes-outside-us-military-base-in-afghanistan.html?_r=2

A suicide bomber driving a truck inflicted scores of casualties outside a small American military installation on Friday and destroyed several government buildings, but failed to enter the American base, according to witnesses and Afghan officials.

At least 84 people were wounded and one killed in the attack, which took place 25 miles from the capital, in Mohammad Agha District, Logar Province, according to Mohammad Zarif Maidkhal, the director of public health in Logar.

A spokesman for the provincial governor said that details were still incomplete.

A NATO spokesman, Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings, confirmed there was a vehicle-borne bomb attack against Combat Outpost McClain in that district. "It was a single attack with no follow-up," he said. "There were no ISAF fatalities. We are still in the process of gathering more information to develop the situation and will release more information as appropriate."

The blast took place at 8 a.m. Friday at the base, which is near the main highway between the city of Kabul and southeastern Afghanistan.

Logar Province in the past two years has seen increasing infiltration from the Taliban, particularly the Haqqani group, a Taliban offshoot believed to be largely financed by Pakistan's top military intelligence service.

An Afghan contractor working nearby at the time of the explosion said the blast appeared to have destroyed several buildings. Officials later said they included a clinic and two other buildings, one of which were the former offices of the aid group CARE, which no longer operates there.

Those buildings were clustered near the gates of an American military base, but the witness was unable to see whether there was any damage inside the base because of the large concrete blast walls surrounding it. He asked that his name be withheld for fear of retribution.

He said a police investigator at the scene told him the bomb was apparently in the trailer of a tractor-trailer truck trying to enter the base. However, a spokesman for the provincial governor said the bomb was hidden in a truck hauling firewood, and a police spokesman put the quantity of explosives at 13 tons.

The Mohammad Agha district borders Kabul Province and is the site of the huge Aynak copper mine, which Chinese officials recently won a contract to develop. The district had been relatively peaceful, a factor in the Chinese interest in Aynak.

Zabiullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban, claimed that the insurgents carried out the suicide attack, which he said had destroyed the American base.

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7. Bomb Blast Hits Minibus, Kills Five Afghan Civilians

Monday, 05 December 2011

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/2011/12/05/1933020/roadside-bomb-kills-5-afghan-civilians.html>

A suicide bomber struck a crowd of Shiite worshippers at a mosque in Kabul on Tuesday, killing at least 54 people in the deadliest of two attacks on a Shiite holy day - the first major sectarian assaults since the fall of the Taliban a decade ago.

Four other Shiites were killed in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif when a bomb strapped to a bicycle exploded as a convoy of Afghan Shiites was driving down the road, shouting slogans for the festival known as Ashoura. Health Ministry spokesman Sakhi Kargar gave the death toll and said 21 people also were wounded in that attack.

The Kabul bomber blew himself up in the midst of a crowd of men, women and children gathered outside the Abul Fazl shrine to commemorate the seventh century death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Imam Hussein. Some men were beating themselves in mourning and food was being distributed.

The shrine, which is near the presidential palace, was packed with worshippers and dozens more were crammed into the courtyard. One witness said the bomber was at the end of a line and detonated his explosives near one of the gates to the shrine.

Sayed Kabir Amiri, who is in charge of Kabul hospitals said 54 were killed and more than 160 wounded in the blast. He said casualties were taken to several hospitals and the toll could rise.

Religiously motivated attacks on Shiites are rare in Afghanistan although they are common in neighboring Pakistan. No group claimed responsibility for Tuesday's blasts, reminiscent of the wave of sectarian attacks that shook Iraq during the height of the war there.

The Taliban strongly condemned the two attacks and said in a statement to news organizations that they deeply regretted that innocent Afghans were killed and wounded.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, speaking at a news conference after meeting German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, said the attack was unprecedented in scope.

He said it was "the first time that on such an important religious day in Afghanistan terrorism of that horrible nature is taking place."

Mohammad Bakir Shaikzada, the top Shiite cleric in Kabul, said he could not remember a similar attack having taken place on such a scale.

"This is a crime against Muslims during the holy day of Ashoura. We Muslims will never forget these attacks. It is the enemy of the Muslims who are carrying them out," he said, declining to place blame.

Shiites make up about 20 percent of Afghanistan's 30 million people, most of them ethnic Hazaras. Although thousands of Hazaras were massacred by the Taliban during fighting in the 1990s, Afghan insurgents - nearly all of them Sunnis - in recent years have focused their attacks primarily on U.S.-led NATO troops and Afghan security forces.

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It was unclear whether Tuesday's attacks mark a change in Afghan Taliban strategy or were carried out by al-Qaida or another group based in Pakistan, where Sunni attacks on Shiites are common. Hard-line Sunnis consider Shiites nonbelievers because their customs and traditions differ from the majority sect.

The last incident of violence between Shiites and Sunnis following the U.S. invasion 10 years ago occurred in early 2006, during Ashoura commemorations in the western city of Herat. During those riots, blamed on Islamic extremists, five people were killed and more than 50 injured.

Mahood Khan, who is in charge of the Abul Fazl shrine, said the explosion occurred just outside a courtyard where dozens of worshippers were lined up as they filed in and out of the packed building.

A few minutes after the blast, bodies could be seen loaded into the trunks of cars while wounded were led away by friends and relatives. Survivors wept in the streets.

"It was a very powerful blast," Khan said. "The food was everywhere. It was out of control. Everyone was crying, shouting. It is a disaster."

Mustafa, a shopkeeper, said he and his mother were delivering food to the worshippers when the blast occurred. Two groups of 150 to 200 people from Kabul had just prayed at the shrine and left.

Another group of more than 100 from Logar province was entering when the explosion occurred. He said the suicide bomber was at the end of the line of worshippers from Logar when he blew himself up near one of the gates to the shrine.

"It was very loud. My ears went deaf and I was blown 3 meters (yards)," said Mustafa, who uses only one name. "There was smoke and red blood on the floor of the shrine. There were people lying everywhere."

The shrine's loudspeaker continued to blast a recitation of the Quran as ambulances carried bodies and wounded away. Women stood outside the shrine wailing and holding crying children.

The shrine is close to the palace where Karzai lives and who is in Europe to attend an international conference on Afghanistan. It is named after Abul Fazl, who was an adviser to a 14th century Mogul emperor. The shrine and its blue minaret is one of Kabul's better known shrines. It is located in Murad Khane area near the Kabul river, a district that has been listed by the World Monuments Fund as one of its 100 most endangered sites of cultural heritage.

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8. Ten Injured In Bicycle Bomb Blast

Saturday, 03 December 2011

<http://english.cri.cn/6966/2011/12/03/2561s670052.htm>

Ten people were injured when a bicycle bomb went off Friday in Shahjoy district of Zabul province with Qalat as its capital, 340 km south of Afghan capital Kabul, the country's Interior Ministry said on Saturday.

"An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) which was placed by enemies of peace and stability on a bicycle exploded in Shahjoy district of Zabul province at 11:00 a.m. local time Friday. As a result of the blast, 10 people were wounded including eight civilians," the ministry said in a statement.

In an unrelated incident, Taliban insurgents opened fire on a vehicle in neighboring Kandahar province, killing a civilian and injuring his wife.

A statement released by the Kandahar provincial government on Saturday said the incident occurred in Zhari district on Friday afternoon.

However, the motive behind the attack was not cleared at the moment.

The Taliban stepped up their attacks on Afghan and NATO-led troops since a rebel offensive was launched in May this year in the insurgency-hit country.

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9. Three Policemen Killed, Four Wounded In IED Attack

Thursday, 01 December 2011

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/nato-service-member-killed-in-roadside-bombing-in-southern-afghanistan/2011/11/30/gIQABLXrBO_story.html

Afghan officials say three policemen died and four others were wounded in an explosion in northeast Afghanistan.

Kamen Khan, a police official in Baghlan district of Baghlan province, says all seven were riding in an Afghan National Police vehicle on Thursday morning when it hit a roadside mine.

On Tuesday in a neighboring district, two German troops were wounded when their vehicle ran over a roadside bomb.

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10. No Casualties Reported In Karachi Blast

Tuesday, 06 December 2011

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/302953/no-casualties-reported-in-karachi-kala-pul-blast/>

An explosion occurred on Karachi's Kala Pul bridge on Tuesday the 10th day of Muharram (Ashura), Express News reported.

Senior Superintendent Police (SP) Tariq Dhareji of the Clifton area said one man was injured in the explosion, who was later shifted to Jinnah Hospital for treatment. He added that the bomb seemed to be a planted device.

The blast left a crater in the middle of the bridge, and was heard at a distance of about 4 kilometers.

Ambulances and Rangers personnel reached the spot.

Earlier, Sindh Home Minister Manzoor Wassan said that over 100 venues in Karachi, Hyderabad and Khairpur were declared highly sensitive on Ashura.

Wassan said that the home ministry received threats and information about possible attacks on Ashura processions. However, the Sindh government deployed around 100,000 security personnel, 80,000 policemen and 20,000 Rangers men. The Frontier Constabulary will also be present at sensitive locations and the army has also been put on alert. "The next 24 hours are very crucial as far as the security is concerned." The minister said that the law enforcement agencies feel confident since they foiled a terrorist attack last month.

Today, Inspector General Sindh Police Musthaq Shah said that about 30,000 policemen have been deployed for the Ashura procession moving from Nishtar Park.

Last night (Monday), a loud blast was heard in the Lines Area of Karachi which the police attributed to a "gas cylinder". A Muharram procession passed by the area just before the blast took place.

While the explosion destroyed the store the cylinder was placed in, no injuries or casualties were reported.

Security forces have been on high alert in the city due to ongoing events linked to Muharram.

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11. Three Security Personnel Killed In Attack

Friday, 09 December 2011

<http://www.rttnews.com/Content/GeneralNews.aspx?Id=1778104&SM=1>

Three security personnel were killed and four injured when a vehicle of the Pakistan Rangers was hit by a roadside bomb in the southern port city of Karachi on Friday.

The bomb, packed with ball bearings, went off in Safoora Goth area of Karachi at 7:25 a.m., said reports quoting Deputy Inspector-General of Police Akram Naeem. Paramilitary personnel were the target of the attack, he added.

Police cordoned off the area and a search operation was on. Officials estimated that around five to six kilograms of explosives were used in the bomb, which was hidden under a pile of clay by the roadside.

The vehicle was reduced to scrap with its windows blown out in the powerful blast for which no group has claimed responsibility so far.

Interior Minister Rehman Malik who condemned the attack ordered an investigation into it.

The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and several other extremist groups are active in Karachi and had carried out major attacks on security and intelligence officers in recent months.

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12. Single Outfit Behind Bombings

Thursday, 08 December 2011

<http://nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/Karachi/08-Dec-2011/Single-outfit-behind-bombings>

Police are investigating the events surrounding bombings of 9th and 10th Muharram that panicked mourners and law enforcers in the city. No headway has been made so far but investigators believe that the two assaults were carried out by a single outfit.

According to a Bomb Disposal Squad officer, the bomb used in Abyssinia Line was a timed-device and carried 8-kg explosive material, while the other used in Kala bridge area contained 3.5 kilos of explosives and was detonated remotely.

The BDS official further said that both the bombs were manufactured locally.

SHO Jahangir Mahar said the two attacks were quite similar which indicated that a single terrorist group was responsible. The assault on 9th Muharram had been portrayed as a gas cylinder explosion before the BDS confirmed that it was a bombing. An improvised explosive device (IED) planted in a shop near Abyssinia Line of Lines Area went off soon after a Muharram procession passed the point late on Monday night. The bomb planted on Kala bridge was to target buses carrying mourners. It left a crater in the middle of the bridge when detonated.

Luckily, no serious damage was caused. Four passers-by, namely Manzoor Hussain, Rasheed, Iftikhar and Kaneez, were wounded in the second attack. They were immediately ferried to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre for treatment.

The bombs exploded with a loud bang that could be heard in the distance of 5-km. Cases have been registered against unidentified criminals under the Anti-Terrorism Act and Explosive Act in the Defence and Brigade police stations.

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13. Multiple Bomb Attacks In Iraq On Shiite Holy Day

Tuesday, 06 December 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/06/world/middleeast/bomb-attacks-in-iraq-on-a-day-holy-to-shiites.html?_r=2

Bomb blasts ripped into throngs of religious pilgrims on Monday as they streamed through Iraq's streets to honor one of the most sacred holidays of Shiite Islam, in what has become almost an annual spilling of blood and stirring of sectarian anger.

At least 20 people — many of them women and children — were killed in three bomb blasts about 50 miles south of Baghdad, security officials and hospital officials said. Dozens more were injured.

In the capital, another three explosions in heavily Shiite neighborhoods left three people dead and nearly 20 wounded, police officials said.

The attacks came as hundreds of thousands of worshipers flocked to the holy city of Karbala to celebrate Ashura, which commemorates the death of a foundational figure in Shiite Islam more than 1,000 years ago.

The holiday, which was suppressed under Saddam Hussein, has become a touchstone of sectarian identity for Iraq's Shiite majority since the American invasion.

Although attacks on worshipers are not new, the blasts on Monday came at an especially sensitive time for Iraq, less than a month before the last United States forces are to leave the country. Only a few military bases remain in American hands, and convoys carrying some of the remaining 10,000 troops head to the Kuwaiti border every day.

On Monday night, a militant group with ties to Saddam Hussein's ousted regime threatened in an Internet video to strike at American officials who stay in Iraq after the Dec. 31 troop withdrawal deadline. In Iraqi military uniforms, their faces covered by scarves, three men from the Naqshbandia Order militant group called the continuing American civilian presence "nothing but a new form of occupation."

The United States is increasing the size of its embassy in Iraq and is opening consulates in the north and south.

The rate of violence in Iraq has fallen significantly, but militants still frequently kill government officials, police officers and soldiers, and try to inflame sectarian divisions by attacking religious targets like pilgrims and clerics.

Around 4:30 p.m. Monday, a car bomb in Babil Province exploded near a mosque that is closely associated with Iraq's leading Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. The blast killed 17 people, spraying pieces of automobile across the road and folding metal into unrecognizable bits of origami. The provincial governor quickly blamed remnants of the Baath Party and Al Qaeda in Iraq. No group claimed responsibility, but the Web site for Al Qaeda in Iraq cheered news of the attacks.

Thirty minutes after the car bombing, two explosions in central Hilla, the provincial capital of Babil, killed an additional three people.

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After the car bombing, a 45-year-old pilgrim who gave his name as Abu Ali was looking for a boy who gave him candy moments before the blast. He said he had seen maimed children and scattered body parts, but the boy was nowhere to be found.

“I have cried blood, not tears,” he said.

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14. IED Incidents On The Rise In Mogadishu

Tuesday, 06 December 2011

http://www.somaliareport.com/index.php/post/2226/IED_Incidents_on_the_Rise_in_Mogadishu

[Source website has locked editing preferences, preventing text from being manually copy/pasted. To view the story, please paste the link above into your browser.]

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15. African Union Commander Doubles Efforts To Prevent IED Attacks
Tuesday, 06 December 2011
<http://www.sunatimes.com/view.php?id=1545>

The African Union forces Commander Gen. Fred Mungisha has said they will double their efforts to prevent deadly explosions in Mogadishu that claims the lives of both civilians and soldiers.

In an exclusive interview with Bar-kulan, the AU force commander said TFG and AU forces have on several times earlier foiled explosions including landmines and suicide bombing aimed at killing masses in Mogadishu.

He said Al-Shabaab has recently failed several attempts to detonate explosions in populated areas in the city, as such was achieved through public corporation with the AU and TFG forces.

Mungisha promised to do all means to possible to make sure that rebels dot not inflict harm on civilians.

Security forces in Mogadishu in the past days trying hard to intercept and detect explosives aimed at causing devastation in the war-torn capital.

Al-Shabaab has so many times claimed responsibility of deadly bomb attacks targeting both civilians and soldiers in Mogadishu.

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16. Somali Troops Thwart VBIED Attack
Wednesday, 01 December 2011
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201112011402.html>

Troops loyal to the Somali interim Federal government in south of the country thwarted two cars laden with explosives, which intended to detonate one of army bases close to the border town of Dhoblay in Lower Jubba region, officials said on Thursday.

The security officials of TFG in southern Somalia confirmed shabelle media that the forces are investigating and asking questions in custody two suicide bombers, who were seized with their bomb cars, as they have been trying to attack the positions of the government soldiers between Tabta and Dhoblay district.

An official in the Dhoblay town, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of he was not authorized to speak to the media told shabelle media that all government troops in Lower Jubba and all border regions along Kenya were put alert any explosion or attack from Al-shabab militants, who recently vowed more blasts on TFG bases every where in the country.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for the failed car bomb attack, though the region has frequently been targeted by the Somali insurgent group of Al-Shabab.

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17. Al-Shabab Militant Detonates VBIED In Mogadishu After Arrest

Tuesday, 06 December 2011

<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/262250/20111206/al-shabab-somalia-mogadishu-bomb.htm>

A car bomb in Mogadishu, Somalia killed at least five people on Tuesday -- the suicide bombing is thought to be the work of al-Shabab, a paramilitary rebel group that wields a deadly control over parts of the country.

Police stopped the car as it approached a busy junction in the capital. From there, the story took an unusual and devastating turn. After being stopped, the bomber was arrested by police officers who took him into custody, according to The Press Association. But then, hours later, police took the suspect back to his vehicle and ordered him to dismantle the explosive device. In a move that seems all too obvious in hindsight, the militant detonated the bomb instead.

Three of those killed were civilians and at least one policeman died.

Al-Shabab, a militant Islamist group that is the ruling clan in many parts of politically unstable Somalia, was expelled from Mogadishu earlier this year by African Union (AU) troops, but the group has been fighting to regain its old territory. Living up to an October promise, al-Shabab has initiated a number of attacks on civilians and government institutions in Mogadishu and elsewhere.

Must Read

Mitt Romney, Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich
Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich, Mitt Romney: Who Funds Them?

Along with the AU, Kenya is also taking an offensive against al-Shabab, attacking from the west. Kenya launched an unprecedented military offensive into Somalia this fall after two Western tourists were kidnapped by the rebel group.

Kenya's campaign has been controversial. Far from backing down, al-Shabab has gone on a counter-offensive against Kenyan troops and are thought to be responsible for two grenade attacks as deep into Kenya as Nairobi, the capital.

The Kenyan military has been quick to report its victories against al-Shabab. On Tuesday, Kenya reported that dozens of militants have been killed in recent skirmishes, including five who tried to attack a navy ship by boat on Monday. According to The Associated Press, the Kenyan military said that 40 militants and 11 Somali government soldiers died in a battle over the weekend, but the report cannot be verified.

Al-Shabab's stated mission is to turn Somalia into an Islamic state governed by sharia law. The group, which finds room to operate within the ineffectiveness of Somalia's existing government, has been linked to al-Qaida and has been known to attack any foreign presence in the country.

In late November, the group raided a number of humanitarian agencies giving aid to those suffering from a long-lasting famine, including the United Nations Refugee Agency, U.N. Children's Fund and World Health Organization.

"I am extremely concerned by Al-Shabab's seizure of property and equipment belonging to several non-governmental organizations and U.N. agencies working to alleviate suffering in southern Somalia," Valerie Amos, U.N. under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, said in a statement last week.

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"I call on groups associated with Al-Shabab to withdraw immediately from humanitarian compounds seized this morning in the regions of Bakool, Bay, Lower Shabelle and Hiraan, and to desist from any further actions which would threaten humanitarian operations and the safety of humanitarian workers," she added.

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18. Policeman Killed In IED Blast At Refugee Camp On Somali Border

Monday, 05 December 2011

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/1-police-killed-in-roadside-bomb-blast-at-kenya-refugee-camp-near-somalia/2011/12/05/gIQA8XpLVO_story.html

A Kenyan government official says a roadside bomb exploded in Kenya's largest refugee camp near the border with Somalia, killing one police officer and wounding three.

Provincial commissioner James Seriani says the explosion took place in the Dadaab refugee camp on Monday. It's the third such roadside bomb attack in Dadaab in recent weeks.

Kenyan troops moved into Somalia in October to fight al-Shabab militants who have promised revenge attacks.

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19. Bomb Blast Kills Ten, Including Children

Wednesday, 07 December 2011

http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/africa/news/article_1679412.php/LEAD-Nigeria-bomb-blast-kills-10-including-children

A bomb blast in central Nigerian killed at least 10 people Wednesday, including a pregnant woman and two children, local media reported.

The explosion happened at a market in the city of Kaduna, which straddles the dividing line between Nigeria's predominately Muslim north and Christian south.

Witnesses who spoke to local media reported seeing plumes of black smoke and flesh scattered across a large area, which ran from the market to a former cinema.

The attack comes a day after the end of a two-day peace conference in Kaduna, designed to promote peace through dialogue between local leaders and the radical Islamist group, Boko Haram.

At the conference, local leaders called for job creation in a bid to reduce tensions fuelled by high unemployment, which they called 'the bane of insecurity in the region.'

Boko Haram attacks have claimed more than 500 lives across northern Nigeria since last year. Nobody claimed responsibility for Wednesday's attack.

In an attack on December 4, suspected by police to be the work of Boko Haram, gunmen stormed a wedding ceremony in the group's hometown, Maiduguri, killing the groom and a guest.

Boko Haram's former spokesman, Ali Konduga, begins a three-year jail term Wednesday after pleading guilty to terrorism charges.

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20. Police, Four Others Injured In Blast

Saturday, 03 December 2011

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=39112

Five people including a Police Superintendent were injured as a bomb placed at Itahari Chaurasta Chowk went off 11.32 am on Saturday.

Sunsari Police Chief SP Raju Manandhar, 25-year-old Tekraj Giri, 24-year-old Surendra Pokhrel, 13-year-old Sunil Bhujel and 44-year-old Ritbahadur Thapa were injured in the explosion. According to Sunsari District Police Office, Giri, Pokhrel and Bhujel are from Itahari-4 while Thapa is a resident of Mrigolia, Morang.

Both the Nepal Police and Traffic Police personnel were on duty when the bomb exploded.

Among the injured, Giri's condition is critical. He has sustained serious injuries to his right hand and chest. Similarly, SP Manandhar had to undergo left ankle surgery, while the rest of the injured are in a normal condition. All the five have been receiving treatment at BP Koirala Medical Institute of Health and Sciences, Dharan.

A team led by Durgaraj Sharma, captain of the Nepal Army Headquarters, Eastern Division, had reached the spot at 11 am.

“Had the team reached on time, the explosion could have been prevented,” a police personnel said.

The bomb was placed 500 meters away from the Eastern division Headquarters and 400 meters away from the Area Police Office, Itahari. The police only came to know about the bomb after a person, who had seen a motorbike-borne man place it, informed them.

The police personnel at the Area police office said that the crossroad remains too busy to notice small things. “As the area remains very crowded, we could not notice the bomb,” he said.

Noticeably, a man, who had lost his mental balance, had tried to take away the bomb while the team was trying to dispose it. On the other hand, the entire incident had irked and scared the public.

Khumbuwan Samyukta Jatiya Mukti Morcha has claimed responsibility for the explosion. Before this incident, the Morcha had placed bomb in several four places in Itahari.

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21. Bridge Impassable Due To Bomb Blast

Saturday, 03 December 2011

<http://www.sunstar.com.ph/zamboanga/local-news/2011/12/03/bridge-impassable-due-bomb-blast-193921>

Al-Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf bandits set off an improvised bomb on a bridge in Sulu province, making it impassable to all vehicles, a military official said Saturday.

Western Mindanao Command spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Randolph Cabangbang, said the incident took place around 1:45 a.m. Saturday in the village of Taung, Patikul town.

Plan your Sinulog week ahead and find out what's in store for Sinulog 2012.

Though no one was reported killed or injured, Cabangbang said the explosion damaged the Tangan-Tangan Bridge, making it impassable to all vehicles.

Cabangbang said the destruction of the bridge paralyzed the transport of people and goods.

Government officials in the province also said the intention of the Abu Sayyaf bandits to destroy the bridge is to paralyze the movement of military troops in the province.

Cabangbang said the militants regard roads and bridges as "avenues to infiltrate their safe havens."

The bombing of said bridge by the Abu Sayyaf bandits was the second incident for this year.

Chief Inspector Amil Baanan said Abu Sayyaf militants also damaged the bridge with a bomb last October 24.

The Abu Sayyaf is on the United States list of terrorist organizations.

American Special Forces are helping train and arm Filipino soldiers fighting the group.

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22. Bomb Blast Hits Cotabato Banana Farm

Saturday, 03 December 2011

<http://www.philstar.com/nation/article.aspx?publicationscategoryid=200&articleid=754624>

A banana plantation in North Cotabato province, where former Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels are working, was hit by a powerful bomb explosion yesterday morning.

Col. Leopoldo Galon, spokesperson of the Armed Forces' Eastern Mindanao Command, said that an improvised explosive device fashioned from a 60mm mortar with a mobile phone as detonating device, was set off at around 8:30 a.m. inside the RNF Industry banana plantation in Barangay Tambak, Tulunan town.

Galon said that unidentified men were seen planting the bomb inside the plantation.

No casualty was reported.

Meanwhile, authorities are investigating if the bomb attack had something to do with the surrender of 60 MILF guerillas led by Commander Sukarno.

Commander Sukarno's group is now working at the banana farm as security guards. Some of them were employed as farm workers.

The military said that the former rebels' employment at the banana plantation is part of the government's integration program for rebels.

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23. Indian Police Detain Six Men Over Bomb Blasts

Wednesday, 30 November 2011

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2011/11/2011113015645632840.html>

Indian police have arrested six men said to be members of a homegrown armed group in connection with a series of fatal bombings.

The men, including one Pakistani, are believed to belong to the Indian Mujahideen, a group with suspected links to fighters in Pakistan, police said in a statement on Wednesday.

The men are alleged to have targeted the German Bakery restaurant in Pune, the Chinnaswamy cricket stadium in the southern software hub of Bangalore and the Jama Masjid, the nation's biggest mosque, in New Delhi.

'Investigation under way'

P Chidambaram, India's minister of home affairs, confirmed the arrests at a news conference, adding that an "investigation is still under way" into the actions of the six men.

Inside Story, 2010 episode: India-Pakistan relations

In the blast at the German Bakery in February last year, attackers left a bomb under a table that exploded, killing 17 people.

Ten people were injured when two bombs went off outside the Bangalore cricket stadium in April 2010.

In the mosque attack in September 2010, two Taiwanese visitors who were part of a film crew were wounded when two men on a motorbike opened fire and a small car exploded.

Police said they recovered guns, cartridges, detonators, doctored documents, fake Indian currency and explosives during their probe.

The Indian Mujahideen has claimed responsibility for numerous bomb attacks in Indian cities in recent years, most recently for a blast outside the Delhi High Court in September which left 15 dead.

The US state department has designated the group a "terrorist" organisation, noting its "close ties" with Pakistan-based armed groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which was blamed for the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people.

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24. Police Deactivate Bomb At Church

Monday, 05 December 2011

<http://www.worthynews.com/11106-church-bombing-goes-bust>

Nepal Police deactivated a bomb discovered near the entrance of the Navajiwani Church in Kathmandu last month.

Hidden in a cloth bag inside a white plastic sack, the "package" aroused the suspicions of the church janitor.

"The sack was left just outside the gate," said Arjun Magar. "I became suspicious when I saw another bag inside, so I called the church elders who called the police."

After clearing the area, police used a series of controlled explosions to render the device harmless.

Pastor Suman Gurung said his parishioners had a lucky escape and that security for future services would be increased.

"We will continue to be vigilant and pray," he said. "We didn't used to examine bags of those coming to worship, but from now on we will do that."

Security became a major concern for Christians in Kathmandu following the bombing of the United Mission to Nepal on November 22.

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25. El Capitan HS Student Arrested, Another Injured In Bottle Bomb Blast

Wednesday, 07 December 2011

<http://www.nbcсандiego.com/news/local/El-Capitan-HS-Student-Arrested-Another-Injured-in-Bottle-Bomb-Blast-135170383.html>

A student was injured and another arrested after a homemade bomb exploded in class at El Capitan High School Tuesday.

The bottle bomb was set off inside a trash can just after 2 p.m. according to San Diego County Sheriff's Department spokesperson Melissa Aquino.

The teenager who detonated the bomb was interviewed at the Santee Sheriff's Station and then arrested and booked into juvenile hall. The teen's identity has not been released.

Another student who was passing by the trash can at the time of the explosion suffered minor injuries.

Hazmat was called out to make sure there were no additional threats. After a sweep of the area, deputies determined the explosion was isolated to the trash can in the classroom.

Classes are expected to resume Wednesday.

It's not the first time a bomb has made its way on to a local high school campus.

In June 2009, a star athlete at San Ysidro High School brought a dozen homemade bombs to school as part of a senior prank.

Elphbert Laforteza pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor charges in a deal with prosecutors avoiding felony charges and prison time. No one was injured in the prank but the bombs Laforteza planted were large enough to hurt or possibly kill someone officials said.

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26. UK Embassy Likely Target Of Manama Bomb Blast

Monday, 05 December 2011

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/bahrain/uk-embassy-likely-target-of-manama-bomb-blast-1.943462>

The British embassy in Bahrain was the likely target of the bomb blast early yesterday in downtown Manama, an interior ministry spokesman said.

"Taking into consideration the location of the blast, the nearest target is the British embassy," Lieutenant Colonel Saleh Salem said.

The spokesman did not rule out links between the blast and the high anti-Britain feelings in Iran, saying that "all possibilities are open at this stage of the investigations."

However, he said that there was no doubt that the inflammatory speeches by Iran's officials "sparked reactions in Bahrain."

Article continues below

"There is also the training on dangerous devices and substances in Syria that we had noted," he said.

The blast occurred after midnight and was caused by explosives placed under the front left wheel of a mini bus parked near the wall of the British embassy and about 50 metres from the main building, the spokesman said.

"The explosion blew off the wheel, shattered the windshield and the left side windows and damaged the front of the vehicle," he said.

Five cars parked near the blast site on Government Avenue were also damaged in the blast.

The embassy is located in the Ras Romman area, a few blocks away from the centre of the capital.

"Given the strength of the explosion and the debris it scattered, it was a highly-explosive substance. Debris was found approximately 32 metres from the blast site. The explosion also left a 30-centimetre crater under the vehicle," he said. "We thank God that there were no injuries or loss of life in the incident."

However, he said that the material used in the blast was still being examined at the ministry's laboratories.

Security around diplomatic missions in Manama has been beefed up and the interior ministry has urged citizens and residents to report any "suspicious car stationed near vital establishments," the spokesman said.

Earlier, a staff told Gulf News that the embassy remained open and that it was "business as usual" for the diplomatic mission ahead of the two-day public holiday to mark Ashura.

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27. Homemade Bomb Explodes In Santiago De Chile

Monday, 28 November 2011

<http://www.hispanicallyspeakingnews.com/notitas-de-noticias/details/homemade-bomb-explodes-in-santiago-de-chile/12089/>

A homemade bomb exploded Monday outside the military prosecutor's office in Santiago, but no injuries or damage were reported, Chile's Carabineros militarized police force told Efe.

No one has claimed responsibility for the bombing, which occurred at 1:00 a.m., a few hours before the trial of six people accused of setting off 20 bombs between 2006 and 2010 started at the Justice Center.

More than two dozen bombings have been staged in Chile since 2006, targeting banks, large corporations, churches and public buildings.

Responsibility for the blasts is usually claimed by anarchists or anti-globalization groups, some of them linked to Chile's disgruntled Mapuche Indians.

The six defendants are being tried for planting bombs and financing terrorist activities.

A total of 476 witnesses and 152 experts are slated to be called to testify during the trial, which is expected to last at least six months.

The six defendants are part of a group of 14 people arrested in August 2010 for belonging to anarchist groups.

Prosecutors withdrew the conspiracy charges against 13 of the suspects on Oct. 4, and eight of them were allowed to go free.

A member of one of the anarchist groups linked by authorities to the attacks died in May 2009 when the bomb he was carrying in a backpack exploded while he was riding a bicycle in Santiago, while another anarchist lost a hand, three fingers on his other hand and was partially blinded when a bomb went off as he was preparing to plant it at a bank branch in June.

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28. Bomb Blast Injures UN Peacekeepers In Lebanon
Friday, 09 December 2011
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16108463>

At least five French UN peacekeepers and a Lebanese civilian have been injured by a bomb blast southern Lebanon, security officials have said.

The bomb went off in the Bourj al-Shamali area, on the outskirts of the port city of Tyre, as a vehicle carrying the troops drove past.

A Unifil spokesman said it was investigating the incident in co-operation with the Lebanese army.

Lebanon's Prime Minister, Najib Mikati, immediately condemned the violence.

"Lebanon considers these attacks as targeting its own security and stability, not only Unifil," he said in a statement.

France's foreign minister said it was determined to continue its involvement with Unifil and would not be intimidated by such "vile acts".

The 4x4 carrying soldiers from the French contingent was passing on a main road that skirts the eastern side of Tyre when the bomb went off.

It was buried at the roadside and left a hole about 1m (3ft) deep.

The five soldiers mainly suffered head injuries.

The bombing was very similar to one that wounded six French troops in July at Sidon, a city further to the north. Six Italian peacekeepers were also hurt in a similar attack in Sidon two months earlier.

The BBC's Jim Muir in Beirut says no group has said it was behind the attacks, but Syria's local critics have been swift to point an accusing finger in its direction.

One pointed out that France was at the forefront of international pressure on Damascus over its crackdown on anti-government protesters, and that some kind of retaliation had been expected, our correspondent says.

However, attacks on Unifil have been taking place long before the uprising began in Syria in March, including one in 2007 in which seven Spanish peacekeepers were killed, he adds.

Our correspondent says much of south Lebanon is controlled behind the scenes by the militant Shia Islamist movement, Hezbollah, which is allied to Syria and fought a bloody war with Israel in 2006.

It has always denied any involvement in attacks on Unifil.

The 12,000-strong force has been deployed in southern Lebanon since 1978 to monitor the border with Israel.

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29. Anarchist Group Sends Letter Bomb To Deutsche Bank CEO

Thursday, 08 December 2011

<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/08/world/europe/germany-deutsche-bank-bomb/index.html?eref=edition>

An Italian anarchist group has claimed responsibility for a failed mail bomb attack on Deutsche Bank CEO Josef Ackermann, German investigators said Thursday.

A suspicious package sent to Ackermann contained a functioning bomb, law enforcement officials in the state of Hesse said.

The package also contained a note from the Informal Federation of Anarchists, or FAI, the Frankfurt state prosecutor and Hesse investigators said in a statement.

The note mentioned "three explosions against banks, bankers, ticks and blood suckers," the officials said.

The letter raises the possibility that two other letter bombs were sent out to other institutions, the statement said.

The FAI an offshoot of the Italian Anarchist Federation. The group has claimed responsibility in previous years for failed mail bombs sent to some European embassies.

Formed in 1945, the Italian Anarchist Federation had seen "a slow but constant increase" of supporters in recent years, said the website of an umbrella group, L'International des Federations Anarchistes.

The Italian organization aims for "radical change" in support of "oppressed and exploited peoples," doing so with opposition to political powers and even the Catholic Church, the website said.

The package was intercepted Wednesday, said police in New York, whom the Germans alerted so they could step up security at Deutsche Bank offices in Manhattan.

The device, which contained shrapnel, was detected in the bank's mail room around 1 p.m. local time, said New York Deputy Police Commissioner Paul Browne.

It did not detonate.

"The return address was listed as a European central bank, which would likely increase the chances of him opening it," said Browne, who urged a general increase in mail room security.

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30. Anarchists Claim Credit For Letter Bomb Sent To Italian Tax Office

Friday, 09 December 2011

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-eu-italy-mail-bomb,0,2682802.story?track=rss>

A letter bomb exploded Friday at an office of Italy's tax collection agency, wounding the organization's director. Police said an Italian anarchist group that sent a letter bomb to Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt earlier in the week claimed responsibility for the attack.

A Rome police official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity, said Friday's bomb was contained in a yellow bubble envelope mailed to the director's attention at an Equitalia office on the outskirts of Rome.

The tax agency director, identified by the government as Marco Cuccagna, underwent surgery after suffering injuries to a hand and his face, caused when a glass desktop was shattered by the explosion, Equitalia official Angelo Coco told the ANSA news agency.

Video: Mom alerts cops to man impersonating officer, giving treats to kids, police say

Italy's Informal Anarchist Federation claimed responsibility. The claim included in the package was "very similar" to that which was contained in the Deutsche Bank letter bomb, which didn't explode, a police official said.

The group, known in Italy as FAI, had warned in its Deutsche Bank claim that there would be three "explosions" in its latest campaign. Last year around Christmas, the anarchist group sent package bombs to three Roman embassies, injuring two people.

Premier Mario Monti, who is pushing a package of tax hikes and spending cuts to help Italy solve a financial crisis, issued a statement expressing solidarity with Cuccagna, as did Italy's president.

"Equitalia has always done, and continues to do, its duty in full compliance with the law. It performs an essential role for the functioning of the state, without which it would be possible to provide services to citizens and their families," said Monti, who is in Brussels for a European Union summit.

Rome Mayor Gianni Alemmano called the bombing "an evil, vile act," and urged vigilance.

"There is someone who wants to take advantage in terroristic terms of the sacrifices that Italy must take to get out of the crisis," Alemmano said on Tgcom24 television.

On Wednesday in Frankfurt, a routine mailroom screening found a bomb contained in a small package that was addressed to Deutsche Bank CEO Josef Ackermann. The explosive was deactivated without incident.

Tucked alongside that bomb was a letter of responsibility from the anarchist group.

The letter, written in Italian, promised "three explosions against banks, bankers, ticks and bloodsuckers," according to the Hesse state Criminal Office.

Germany's Federal Prosecutors' Office, responsible for national security and terrorism probes, said Friday it is taking over the investigation. The letter contained about 50 grams of explosive and a fully functional trigger, it said.

On Dec. 23, 2010, identical package bombs exploded at the Swiss and Chilean embassies in Rome, badly wounding the two people who opened them. A third bomb was safely defused at the Greek Embassy four days later.

The anarchist group claimed responsibility for the embassy bombs, saying it was acting in solidarity with jailed Greek anarchists who had asked their comrades to organize and coordinate a global "revolutionary war."

Extreme left-wing and anarchist movements have existed for decades in Europe. They staged deadly attacks across the continent in the 1960s and 1970s.

Though more sporadic in recent decades, official figures from the European Union's police agency, Europol, show that attacks linked to such groups are on the rise, with most of the incidents in Italy, Spain and Greece.

Greece, Spain and more recently Italy have been hit hard by government cutbacks and unemployment resulting from a continentwide debt crisis.

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31. Mail Bomb Prompts Mexican Archdiocese To Call For Increased Security

Sunday, 04 December 2011

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/mail-bomb-prompts-mexican-archdiocese-to-call-for-increased-security/>

The Archdiocese of Mexico is calling on local officials to improve security after a package containing explosives was mailed to the archdiocesan chancery.

“We will take basic security measures,” Father Hugo Valdemar, spokesman for the archdiocese, said. “This can’t be taken lightly as this is a threatening situation.”

On Nov. 25, Mexico City police investigated and removed the package, which appears to have been sent by local anarchist group Liberacion Total. The same group was responsible for setting an armored car on fire in the Mexican capital on Nov. 5.

Father Valdemar reported that the archdiocese’s Cardinal Norberto Rivera is unshaken by the incident.

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32. Columbian President Bolsters Fight To End Landmine Use

Thursday, 17 November 2011

http://www.infosurhoy.com/cocoon/saii/xhtml/en_GB/features/saii/features/main/2011/11/17/feature-01

Former soldier Jairo Quiroga is among the victims of landmines in the Andean nation – and President Juan Manuel Santos wants him to be among the last.

Quiroga lost his right leg when he stepped on an explosive device during an attack by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the department of Huila about 18 months ago.

Landmines have killed 1,935 and injured 7,597 in the past 21 years, according to the Presidential Program for Comprehensive Action against Anti-Personnel Mines (PAICMA). Of the 9,532 who have been killed or wounded, 5,678 were police or military personnel, with the remaining 3,854 civilians – 10% of whom were children.

From January to September, landmines have killed 19 civilians and 46 soldiers.

“We don’t want even one more landmine,” Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said recently. “We categorically reject the use of this type of terrorist strategy.”

From January to July, 3,428 landmines have been deactivated in Colombia, according to the Ministry of Defense.

But there are plenty of landmines still buried throughout the country – just ask Iván C. León, a member of the army squadron whose raid led to the death of FARC leader Alfonso Cano earlier this month. León was on a team that was sweeping for landmines so troops could pursue Cano.

León’s team, however, could not find them all on Nov. 4.

Colombian soldiers risk their lives to deactivate landmines in areas of dense vegetation. A total of 3,428 landmines have been deactivated in Colombia since 2001, according to the Ministry of Defense. (Courtesy of the Colombian government)

“[One soldier] found a landmine because he realized the ground had been disturbed, but neither the dog nor the detector had warned of its presence,” León told the local media. “We ended up in a landmine field without knowing it. Suddenly, one of the soldiers stepped on a landmine. I immediately went to find a stick to make an improvised stretcher – and then it happened to me.” In the explosion that followed, León suffered the loss of his left foot.

But the carnage and tragedy didn’t end there.

Soldiers Luis Gabriel Aranda, Luis Alfonso Toro, Roy Lugo and Norberto López, all under the age of 30, were injured by landmines following Cano’s trail.

“The guerrilla forces now make landmines with plastics, which is why neither the dogs nor the metal detectors can find them,” León added.

María Sanmiguel, a terrorism and political analyst from the Universidad del Rosario, said the FARC uses landmines and bombings because it lacks the manpower to fight the military any other way.

“The fact that the FARC are using better materials to make landmines and burying more and more of these devices shows their fear and cowardice as they are faced with a lost cause,” she said. “This shows that they don’t have the human power to fight against the authorities and they want to hide it with this type of cowardly strategy. The more victims there are, the harder the government comes down on them. This is logic that the FARC clearly have not considered.”

Colombian law enforcement officials recently deactivated a field of landmines in the department of Putumayo and discovered 461 landmines in a wooded area of Puerto Valdivia in the department of Antioquia, which is a hotbed for the explosive devices, according to the government. The Colombian Army has a program in which yoga is used to rehabilitate soldiers injured by landmines. (Carlos Barahona for Infosurhoy.com)

The Colombian Army has a program in which yoga is used to rehabilitate soldiers injured by landmines. (Carlos Barahona for Infosurhoy.com)

But the government is doing more in its fight against landmines than deactivating them: It’s providing rehabilitation and counseling to victims of the explosive devices through a series of initiatives.

Every Tuesday, Quiroga is among 20 soldiers who go to the ATMA rehabilitation center in Bogotá to take yoga classes, which Quiroga said helps them heal psychologically and physically.

“We try to stay optimistic and enthusiastic,” Quiroga said. “We don’t waste time thinking about what happened to us. For us, to serve in the army is an honor, but now we are focused on strengthening our spirits after our accidents.”

Soldier Mauricio Vega, 24, lost both legs and part of his face after stepping on a landmine in the department of Cauca.

Vega agrees with Quiroga that yoga helps him think positively.

“We have been taught at ATMA to focus on the present,” he said. “Yoga has been a singular experience. However, we cannot forget our peers who are still fighting out there and who every day put themselves at risk to achieve peace. Sometimes, a misstep can change your life, but the steps the army is taking to put an end to the FARC are strong.”

Santos said his administration supports victims of landmines.

“We are working on a public policy to be able to reintegrate all those who have suffered the scourge of ... landmine[s],” Santos said. “There will be no exceptions: We want to show that even though the FARC are determined to kill our police officers, our military, our children, and the men and women of Colombia, we will not turn our back on anyone. We will fight to include every one of these victims, who are a tragic inevitability of an ideology that is about to disappear.”

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33. New Details Emerge In 2010 Stockholm Bombing Case

Wednesday, 07 December 2011

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8940758/Loose-wire-saved-dozens-of-Christmas-shoppers-caught-in-suicide-bomb-attack-by-Taimour-Abdulwahab.html>

The Stockholm suicide bomber Taimour Abdulwahab was carrying up to 17kg of nails and explosives when he blew himself up among Christmas shoppers a year ago but a loose wire meant the bomb did not detonate properly saving dozens of lives.

Details of the last hours of Luton extremist Taimour Abdulwahab were revealed by the Swedish security services as they laid out the results of a 12-month investigation.

The bomber arrived at Skavsta Airport, Sweden from Britain on November 19 and from there he went to Tranås where he stayed with his parents for three weeks, investigators said.

He had already begun purchasing bomb-making equipment in the form of a handheld pollen press on the internet before he left Luton, sources said.

They said that in Britain, Abdulwahab was not a “leading man who charismatically gathered people around him.”

“His views appear to have been shared with a handful of other people who were also part of his social network,” a security source told the Daily Telegraph.

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Investigators could find no evidence that he had accomplices with him in Stockholm when he launched the attacks but investigations are continuing in Britain where one man has been arrested and charged.

In Sweden, Abdulwahab apparently stayed around Tranås but investigators have been unable to discover where he assembled his bombs.

They have been able to establish that he bought a white Audi, which he used for the attack, in Tranås on November 22 and bought other bomb-making equipment in shops around the town.

But there is a missing 40 minutes after Abdulwahab said goodbye to his parents in Tranås at 11.30pm and leaving the town at 12.10pm on December 11 last year.

His parents expected him to return that afternoon, but newly released CCTV images showed him at a petrol station with the bomb apparently already strapped to his body.

The pictures showed him emerging from a toilet at the petrol station in Herrbeta at 1.45pm with the device under his coat. Investigators said they believed he had visited the toilet to prime the device.

“He is a slim man, but you can see that he is thick around his stomach when leaving the petrol station”, the Swedish security service said when showing the pictures.

He got lost on the journey from Tranås to Stockholm after putting the wrong address into his SatNav and heading for Norrtälje, leading to a 45 minute detour.

Arriving in the Swedish capital, he parked in Olof Palme Street at 4.15pm and remained in the car for 25mins, sending his suicide message to the security service, a local news agency, his parents and his wife back in Luton.

Investigators revealed that they found another bomb in the car along with a walkie-talkie which they believe was supposed to detonate the bomb.

Abdulwahab set fire to the car at around 4.50pm but the device, made from a pressure cooker like the other bombs, did not detonate.

CCTV images from the car fire showed a column of smoke rising into the air and a loud bang as crowds gathered.

Investigators found four litres of petrol and fireworks had been in the car to help fuel the device which was on the passenger seat.

“A possible scenario is that the car was supposed to attract people and that the bomb was supposed to explode. The perpetrator planned to walk into this environment and trigger his bombs,” Ms Agnetha Hilding Qvarnstrom, prosecutor for the Swedish security service said.

They also showed images of how the Abdulwahab strapped 9-11 kg of explosives onto his back, which included a pressure cooker and six aluminium cylinders surrounded by nails, and another 6kg around his stomach.

He headed from Queen Street to Bryggargatan, walking back and forth apparently trying to set off his bomb.

“He was loaded with explosives. The blowout was massive,” Ms Qvarstrom said.

SAPO, the Swedish security service, said a loose wire saved many lives, but refused to confirm reports that up to 40 people could have been killed.

They said the device was “not very complicated” but showed footage of a test explosion conducted with just 3kg of explosive. “We did not dare to use more than 3kg of explosive. That was because just 3 kg causes such a huge explosion,” Ms Qvarnstrom said.

SAPO have followed up 1,200 leads and conducted 800 interviews in the last 12 months.

Abdulwahab, 29, grew up in Sweden but lived in Luton for around ten years after moving to Britain to study sports therapy at university.

His wife, Mona Thwani, was arrested by British police in September as part of their investigation but released without charge.

Another man, Nasseridine Menni, who had been living in Glasgow, faces charges that he supplied money to Abdulwahab and was in communication with him immediately before the attacks.

Investigators said they had been able to confirm reports that he visited Syria and Iraq, although they could not be certain that he met al-Qaeda while there.

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According to charges in Scotland he made a phone call to a mobile phone in Iraq immediately before launching his attacks on December 11 last year.

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