

RAPID

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WEEKLY NEWS UPDATE

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



Iraq Bomb Blasts Kill At Least 36 On Market Day

Car bombs struck two outdoor markets and a group of taxi vans in Shiite areas across Iraq, killing at least 36 people and wounding nearly 100 .

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1. [Attack, Pakistan] Taliban Bombers Wreak Havoc At Military Camp

Saturday, February 2 2013

<http://dawn.com/2013/02/03/13-soldiers-12-militants-11-civilians-killed-taliban-bombers-wreak-havoc-at-military-camp/>

Militants stormed a camp of security forces in the Sarai Naurang area of Lakki Marwat district before daybreak on Saturday, leaving 13 soldiers and 12 militants dead. Eleven civilians were killed after a suicide bomber entered a house in a nearby residential colony and blew himself up.

Eleven security personnel were wounded in the assault, officials said. The Sarai Naurang town is a business hub of Lakki Marwat district, about 160kms south of Peshawar. It is situated near the Frontier tribal region Bannu.

Claiming responsibility for the attack, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan said it was carried out to avenge the killing of two Taliban commanders — Toofani and Faisal — in a US drone attack last month.

“We had sent only four fighters on the mission,” he told journalists by phone from an unknown location, intending to contradict the government’s claim that 12 militants lost their lives during the ferocious gunfight.

It was the biggest attack on security forces in Lakki Marwat district.

According to officials, militants attacked the army camp at 3.30am from different directions simultaneously. “The exact number of attackers is not known, but it could have been between 25 and 30,” an official said.

“They used sophisticated and automatic weapons, managing to keep security personnel engaged for several hours,” he added.

One attacker wearing a suicide vest broke into the house of a revenue official in a residential colony of the irrigation department and blew himself up, killing four children, three women and four men.

Security officials believe that militants infiltrated the area from a place bordering North Waziristan. Some of them were wearing suicide jackets, officials said.

“The gunbattle between security forces and militants lasted over an hour,” they added.

Some reports, however, suggested that rockets fired by militants at the army camp hit a number of houses, killing civilians.

An official said the slain civilians were residents of three or four houses. The explosion caused extensive damage to the structures.

“The bodies of civilians were taken to the civil hospital in Sarai Naurang and then handed over to relatives,” he added.

According to security sources, 11 army and Frontier Constabulary personnel were injured in the attack. “They were taken to the



Combined Military Hospital in Bannu. The security forces also killed 12 militants.”

Suicide jackets removed from the bodies of two militants were later defused by bomb experts.

Police and security forces closed Naurang-Bannu Road and launched a search operation in the area.





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2. [Law Enforcement, Afghanistan] Kabul Police Arrest Six Suspected Suicide Bombers

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/feb/3/kabul-police-arrest-6-suspected-suicide-bombers/>

Afghan police on Sunday arrested six men and seized suicide vests, assault rifles and more than 50 hand grenades during a raid on a residential building in central Kabul, senior officials said.

Gen. Mohammad Ayub Salangi, Kabul police chief, said an investigation was under way to determine the identities of the men, whom he described as “terrorists,” and what they were planning to attack.

The raid comes as British Prime Minister David Cameron meets in London with the presidents of Afghanistan and Pakistan to discuss prospects for peace talks with the Taliban. Mr. Cameron initiated the meetings with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari last year to boost cooperation among the countries and promote regional stability.

The talks, on Sunday and Monday, are expected to focus on preventing a Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan when British, American and other NATO troops withdraw from the country by the end of next year. Downing Street said the trilateral meeting will include Afghan and Pakistani army and intelligence chiefs for the first time.

Kabul police Deputy Chief Daud Amin said authorities discovered the explosive vests and at least 55 hand grenades among other weapons in the house.

Recently, teams of Talibansuicide bombers had carried out two spectacular attacks in central Kabul.

On Jan. 21, five Talibansuicide bombers attacked the traffic police headquarters, killing three policemen and wounding at least 30 people. All five attackers were killed in a nine-hour gun battle. That attack came less than a week after six Talibansuicide bombers attacked the gates of the Afghan intelligence service, killing one guard and wounding dozens.

In other violence, an Afghan government official said a roadside bomb killed a family of five, including two young children, on Saturday night in southern Afghanistan. The administrator for Miyanishin district in Helmand province, Shah Mahmood Shafa, said the family was driving through the district when their car hit the bomb.





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3. [Attack, Afghanistan] Family Dies In Helmand Bomb Blast

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/9293-family-dies-in-helmand-bomb-blast>

A family has been killed by a roadside bomb in southern Helmand province Saturday afternoon, local officials said.

The blast happened in Helmand's Meyanishin district when the family's vehicle struck the roadside bomb, killing two children, a woman and two men, provincial spokesman Farid Ahmad Farang said.

"All of them were members of one family," he told TOLONews.

No group including the Taliban has claimed responsibility for the blast.

Insurgents use improvised explosive devices hidden in roads to target Afghan and Nato troops, but most of the victims are civilians.



AFPAK

4. [Security, Pakistan] Ten Kg Bomb Defused In Quetta

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://paktribune.com/news/10kg-bomb-defused-in-Quetta-257109.html>

The Frontier Corps (FC) seized explosive materials rigged to a bicycle on the main Sariab Road, on Sunday.

According to police, someone had attached the explosives with a bicycle which was parked on Sariab Road near Tariq Hospital. An FC patrol, on suspicion, inspected the bicycle and discovered the bomb.

"When looked in and an explosive device was recovered which was attached to the bicycle," police said, adding that the Bomb Disposal Squad was called in to defuse the bomb. BDS officials said that the explosives weighed 10 kilogrammes.

Police have registered a case into the incident. However, no arrest has been made in this connection.



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5. [Security, Pakistan] Heavy Cache Of Explosives Seized In FATA

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-86691-Heavy-cache-of-explosives-recovered-in-Mohmand>

Security forces on Monday recovered heavy cache of lethal weapons during a raid in Shani Khel area of Mohmand Agency in tribal belt, Geo News reported.

Commandant Mohmand Rifles Colonel Mushtaq told media that the raid was conducted on the basis of information received from a bomber who was arrested from Yaka Gunda area two days ago.

He said that the forces recovered 5000 Kg explosives, Jihadi literature, an anti-tank gun, a wireless phone and hundreds of shells and suicide vests during the raid at a basement in Shani Khel area.

The officer said that as many as 50 terrorists including would-be suicide bombers had been arrested during the last month.



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6. [Attack, Afghanistan] Blast At Restaurant Kills Five In Afghanistan

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://dawn.com/2013/02/06/blast-at-restaurant-kills-five-in-afghanistan/>

A bomb hidden in a pressure cooker exploded inside a restaurant in northern Afghanistan Tuesday, killing five people, senior officials said.

The explosion, which occurred shortly before noon in Faryab province, was targeting a former militant commander, according to the provincial governor Mohammadulla Batash.

The former militant commander, Mohammad Nadir, was among seven people wounded in the blast in the upscale district of Khwaja Sabz Poshi Wali, Batash said, adding that two suspects had been arrested.

Nobody claimed responsibility for the blast.



AFPAK

7. [Attack, Pakistan] Police Officer Survives Bomb Attack In City

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=194557>

Tuesday, February 05, 2013 - Karachi—Militants' plan to target a police officer was foiled in Karachi's Hawks Bay Road area on Monday morning when a planted went off detonated before time. SHO Maripur's police vehicle was targeted on Hawks Bay Road when he was expected to appear before a court.

Police reports suggest that around three kilograms explosive material was used in the attack. According to police officials they were being targeted for taking actions against "target killers." The incident spread fear among residents of the area. Meanwhile, an absconder, involved in attacking president of the Malir Bar, was arrested two days after he had escaped from police custody on Friday.



AFPAK

8. [Attack, Pakistan] Bomb Kills Ten Near Pakistan DVD Shop

Friday, February 8 2013

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/world/16099232/>

Ten people were killed and another 26 wounded when a bomb exploded near a shop selling DVDs and mobile phones in Pakistan's northwestern tribal belt on Friday, officials said.

The attack happened in Kalaya, the main town of Orakzai district where the military has been battling Taliban and Al-Qaeda linked militants for years.

"The blast killed at least 10 people and wounded another 26," said local administration official, Fazal Qadir, updating an earlier death toll of eight.

The bomb targeted people from the pro-government Feroz Khel tribe, who have shops in the market, he said.

Government official Mehmood Aslam said that the bomb was planted near the DVD and mobile shop surrounded by small kiosks selling tea and other edibles.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

DVD and CD shops in northwestern Pakistan have been bombed in the past by militants who deem their business "un-Islamic".

Orakzai is one of seven tribal districts on the Afghan-Pakistan border where Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants have carved out strongholds to plot attacks on Pakistani, Afghan and Western targets.

Islamabad says more than 35,000 people have been killed as a result of terrorism in the country since the 9/11 attacks on the United States.



AFPAK

9. [Attack, Pakistan] Bomb Kills Cop In Karachi

Friday, February 8 2013

<http://paktribune.com/news/Bomb-kills-cop-in-Karachi-257239.html>

A policeman was killed and five other people, including two police, were wounded in a bomb attack targeting a police van in Karachi on Thursday, officials said.

"A low-intensity remote-controlled bomb planted on a footpath exploded in Orangi town injuring six people, including three of our officials. One policeman died in a hospital," police official Naveed Nasir told AFP. "Another police official is in critical condition," he said.

Orangi is an impoverished neighbourhood in the west of the city. "We can't say who is behind this attack, but it is certainly a part of the terror campaign aimed at police officials that has killed and injured scores in the last two months," said another official Ahmed Khan.



AFRICOM

10. [Trend, Mali] Thirty French Warplanes Blast Islamist Targets In Mali

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/30-french-warplanes-blast-islamist-targets-mali>

Thirty French warplanes on Sunday blasted Islamic extremist training and logistics centres in northeast Mali, just hours after President Francois Hollande visited the country, the military said.

Fighter jets, refuelling and reconnaissance planes took part in the "major" overnight operation in the Tessalit area north of Kidal, military spokesman Colonel Thierry Burkhard told AFP.

Kidal is the last bastion of radicals who occupied the desert north for months before France's surprise intervention.

Tessalit, near the border with Algeria, is believed to be where seven French nationals captured by Islamists are being held.

Hollande received a rapturous welcome in Mali on Saturday as he promised that France would stay as long as necessary to continue the fight against Islamist rebels.

He told Malians it was time for Africans to take the lead but that France would not abandon them.

Malian Foreign Minister Tieman Hubert Coulibaly said he hoped the French military operation in his country would continue.

"Faced with these hardened fighters whose arsenal must be destroyed, we hope that the mission will continue," he told France's Journal du Dimanche newspaper, adding that the "aerial dimension" of the campaign was particularly important.



AFRICOM

11. [Attack, Kenya] Suicide Bomber Injures Four In Wajir

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201302041198.html>

A suicide bomber detonated himself in a busy market in Wajir a town in north-eastern Kenya on Sunday, injuring 4, Garowe Online reports.

According to local sources, a non-native of the predominantly Somali populated north eastern Kenya entered a busy intersection after Isha prayers in Wajir, and detonated the explosives that were strapped to his body.

There were no casualties apart from the bomber however, the explosion injured 4 including 1 Kenyan police officer.

Authorities quickly rushed to the scene locking off the intersection as they investigated the explosion. Business in the market came to a standstill on Saturday night but gradually returned to normal on Sunday.

Attacks in the north eastern region have escalated following Kenyan troops entering southern Somalia to battle Al Shabaab late 2011.



AFRICOM

12. [Trend, Ghana] Alleged Bomb Attack Foiled

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=264078>

Highly placed sources within the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), have revealed to The Herald that on January 14, 2013, before the rally, its bomb squad was summoned to the premises of the Bureau of National Communication to help dismantle a bomb made from dynamites.

The bomb had been discovered directly under a high voltage transformer, belonging to the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG), and according to experts, many lives would have been lost and a huge number of properties destroyed had it exploded that day.

In December last year, a similar incident plotted by Michael Omari Wadie, a one-time NPP parliamentary aspirant for the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency seat, was foiled by a Police cum Military team who had gone to rescue officials of the Israeli company, Superlock Technologies Limited (STL), at Dzowulu. He was arrested trying to set an ECG transformer ablaze.

The January incident, however, demanded skill from the specialized Ghana Army team, called EOI, to dismantle the dynamites which are mostly used in Ghana by mining and constructions companies to break rocks, from the premises of the Bureau of National Communication on that fateful Monday morning.

The four dynamites with serial numbers 17083458, 17083462, 17083446 and 17083440 had been tied with long cotton thread and placed inside a long, but shallow-stretching arc-shaped hole to enable the assailant/s ignite them with fire.

Meanwhile, the dynamites have been traced to a company here in Ghana, but it is not clear whether the state security apparatus has made any arrests yet.



Again, it is not certain whether the dynamites and the possible explosion which would have occurred, has anything to do with the numerous mysterious fire outbreaks occurring in major markets across the country, especially in Accra and Kumasi, which the Deputy Communication Director of the NPP, Sammy Awuku made reference to during the Taifa event.

The 28-year-old, Sammy Awuku attributed the fire outbreaks to a misfortune which has befallen Ghana, because the will of Ghanaians to have Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP as president, was stolen and given to John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

The same Sammy Awuku, it would be recalled led some young men and women belonging to the NPP to besiege the premises of STL in Accra prior to the announcement of the 2012 elections results, claiming the company was



helping the Electoral Commission (EC) to rig the elections for then candidate John Mahama.

It was during this attack that Michael Omari Wadie, who is a member of the pro-NPP group, Alliance For Accountable Government (AFAG) was arrested trying to set an ECG transformer ablaze.



AFRICOM

13. [Attack, Somalia] Roadside Bomb Kills One African Union Soldier In Rare IED Attack

Monday, February 4 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/somalia-roadside-bomb-kills-1-african-union-soldier-in-rare-ied-attack/2013/02/04/1b437468-6eea-11e2-b35a-0ee56f0518d2_story.html

An official in Somalia says a roadside bomb has killed an African Union soldier.

Floribert Biyereke, a spokesman for Burundian troops, said one soldier died after the roadside bomb exploded on Monday. Biyereke blamed the attack on the country's Islamic extremist rebels, al-Shabab.

Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, has been enjoying a relatively peaceful period following the ouster of al-Shabab from the city in August 2011.

The militant group is still blamed for infrequent suicide and roadside bomb attacks.



AFRICOM

14. [Security, Nigeria] Explosive Detonated Near Abuja Force CID

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201302041794.html>

A loud blast was heard after an explosive device planted near the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), close to Garki Area 10 post office was detonated this morning by the Police.

Daily Trust learnt that the explosive device was detonated by the Police Force Anti Bomb Squad around 10 O'clock this morning.

The device was purportedly discovered and removed in a successful controlled detonation by police without any serious damage or casualty.

Attempts to reach the Federal Capital Territory Police spokesperson Doris England to confirm the report was unsuccessful as her phone number was not responding.



AFRICOM

15. [Security, Nigeria] Police Defuse Parcelled Explosive 'Meant' For Okonjo-Iweala

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201302050319.html?viewall=1>

The police anti-bomb squad Monday defused a parcel suspected to contain some explosive items.

The parcel, which was addressed to the Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, was dropped at the post office in Area 10, Garki, Abuja.

There was pandemonium in Abuja as the news of the discovery of the suspected parcel bomb spread across the city with residents scampering for safety.

According to the Post Master General (PMG) of the Federation, Mr. Ibrahim Mori-Baba, a man suspected to be of unsound mind planted the parcel in front of the post office last Friday.

However, he could not confirm if the parcel was rigged with explosives or not.

He said security agents had promised to investigate the content of the parcel in order to determine if what exploded during a controlled detonation was a bomb or not.

"What happened was that on Friday, somebody just came; we couldn't understand whether that person was a sane person or not. He wanted to go to the post office but unfortunately for him, the gate was closed and he couldn't have access to our building, so he left the so-called parcel by the main gate.

"I call it so-called parcel because before any parcel could get through the process, there are processes that have to be undertaken and these include weighing of the parcel and then determining how much the sender will pay.

"We will also examine the parcel in the sender's presence. We will bring out the content to see what you are about to send. In this case, this person left the parcel there, went inside, bought stamps, and pasted it on it to indicate as if the thing went through our process.

"I want to say that it didn't go through our process, the man just wanted a camouflage to say that he had already posted it therefore requiring us to deliver it. But that parcel was not processed.

"The police came and they were able to examine it. Eventually they found something suspicious and it was a bomb," Mori-Baba added.

In his account of the incident, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Commissioner, Aderenle Shinaba, said the Police Explosion Ordinance Device Squad, disarmed a 40-ton object made up of sand and tiles discovered on the premises of NIPOST, in Area 10 of Garki district, Abuja.

Shinaba, while addressing reporters, denied reports of a bomb blast in the FCT, saying: "The true position is that no bomb blast occurred anywhere in Abuja today (Monday).



"At about 10 am, we got information that something was packaged in a carton, which looked like a bomb and planted at the entrance of NIPOST in Area 10.

"As a result of the current security situation in the country, we didn't want to take any chances. So I moved my officers (from the Explosive Ordinance Department and Anti-terrorist squads) to the scene.

"And to avoid what happened in Kaduna recently when a policeman in attempting to detonate a bomb lost his life, I directed the Explosive Ordinance Department to detonate the object technically from a distance.

"We detonated it and after that, discovered it was a package containing sand and tiles, that it had nothing to do with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or explosives.

"So there is no need for anxiety or panic. It was the detonation of the object that people were interpreting to be a bomb blast."

While assuring FCT residents of their safety at all times, Shinaba said the FCT Police Command was on top of the security situation in the capital city.



AFRICOM

16. [Trend, Mali] Stash Of Explosives, Grenades Found In Mali City Amid Reports Of Clashes With Islamists Nearby

Wednesday, February 6 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/french-defense-minister-extremists-in-mali-attack-near-french-held-city-of-gao/2013/02/06/cf0ddf66-7047-11e2-b3f3-b263d708ca37_story.html

Malian soldiers patrolling a city recently abandoned by Islamic insurgents uncovered a stash of industrial-strength explosives Wednesday. They found grenades at another site and a possible booby-trapped vehicle, underscoring the risk of urban terror-style attacks.

The discoveries came a day after one rocket fired by suspected militants landed in a dusty residential neighborhood of Gao and French soldiers clashed with militants outside the town. The developments highlight the complications for the military intervention by France and the risks of a looming French troop drawdown.

"It's a real war ... when we go outside of the center of cities that have been taken, we meet residual jihadists," France's defense minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, said Wednesday on Europe-1 radio. French troops clashed Tuesday with Islamic extremists firing rocket launchers outside Gao, he said.

French President Francois Hollande said France may start pulling out of this vast nation in northwest Africa at the end of March. Government spokeswoman Najat Vallaud-Belkacem said in Paris Wednesday that the withdrawal will depend on an increase in the deployment of African forces, which are meant to take over the international effort to secure Mali and help its weak army keep the peace.

The U.N. Security Council is scheduled to hold private consultations on Mali on Wednesday. The Security Council is likely to wait until the end of February to adopt a new resolution authorizing a U.N. peacekeeping force for Mali, a well-informed U.N. diplomat said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

France is expected to keep a rapid reaction force in Mali to back up the U.N. force, two U.N. diplomats said.

The stash of NITRAM 5 explosives was hidden inside rice bags that were left in a communal trash area amid used tin cans of meat and empty plastic bottles. The Malian soldiers urged crowds of civilians who gathered nearby to stay away.

Groups of Malian soldiers on foot were called out to several sites Wednesday, including one building where they found grenades alongside a large suitcase and reading material in Arabic script about Shariah law. At another site, they called in a bomb team after finding what appeared to be a booby-trapped vehicle.

Gao has been held by French-led forces since late January, and there have been concerns of a counterinsurgency by remnants of the Islamic radicals belonging to the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, or MUJAO.

France's defense minister said hundreds of Islamist fighters have been killed, speaking Tuesday night on France BFM TV. French troops also have suffered casualties, but only some light wounds, he said Wednesday on Europe-1 radio. It is the first report of French casualties since a helicopter pilot was killed Jan. 11.

Le Drian said French aircraft are continuing airstrikes every night on suspected militant arms depots and mine-making sites. On the ground, troops have found war materiel, weapons manuals and makeshift laboratories for constructing improvised explosive devices.

France is expected to keep a rapid reaction force in Mali to back up the U.N. force, two U.N. diplomats said.

Gao has been held by French-led forces since late January, and there have been concerns of a counterinsurgency by remnants of the Islamic radicals belonging to MUJAO.

France launched a swift military intervention Jan. 11 against Islamist extremists who had taken over northern Mali, where they imposed a harsh version of Shariah law.

France's defense minister said hundreds of Islamic fighters have been killed, speaking Tuesday night on France BFM TV.

In Timbuktu on Wednesday, civilians handed over dozens of arms and munitions that had been abandoned by Ma-



lian troops who fled advancing rebels.

The proliferation of arms in the city of Timbuktu remains a real danger to civilians, officials and residents said. “For every five houses that we search, we find arms in at least one,” said Capt. Samba Coulibaly, spokesman for the Malian army in Timbuktu.

While the French-led forces quickly seized Timbuktu and Gao, the effort has been slower in the third provincial capital of Kidal.

A secular rebel movement fighting for a separate nation for Mali’s minority Tuareg nomads claims it is holding several smaller northern towns, including Kidal, even though French and Chadian troops entered the city Tuesday.

Moussa Ag Assarid of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, or NMLA, said their fighters also are holding the northeastern towns of Tessalit, Menaka, Aguelhok and Tinzawatten. Azawad is what the Tuaregs call their homeland.

Mali army national spokesman Diarran Kone refused to comment on the NMLA claims, saying only that “the reconquest is continuing.” It was not immediately possible to verify the NMLA claims. Phone networks remained down in the area.

Trouble began last year in Mali, once a stable democracy in West Africa, with the latest in a series of Tuareg rebellions in the north. The Malian army staged a coup in the faraway capital, Bamako, and in the chaos that followed, the Tuaregs and Islamic extremists made rapid advances, seizing the main cities in northern Mali. Poorly armed and demoralized Malian soldiers fled before their advance.

But the secular fighters fell out with the Islamist extremists. As the extremists have fled the French bombing campaign, it appears the NMLA fighters have moved back into some areas.

They have said they are willing to work with the French forces but not Malian troops, whom they accuse of committing reprisals against the lighter-skinned Tuaregs and Arabs.





AFRICOM

17. [Trend, Mali] Mali Explosives Cache Raises Concerns

Wednesday, February 6 2013

<http://www.sfgate.com/world/article/Mali-explosives-cache-raises-concerns-4258300.php>

Soldiers combing abandoned jihadist hideouts and sand-dusted streets for weapons have found powerful explosives, raising the specter Wednesday of bomb attacks by the militants who fled into the desert after the arrival of French forces.

As the French began talking about a timeline for a troop drawdown, there also were growing concerns that the Islamic militants may be creeping back toward their stronghold amid reports of clashes near Gao.

France's defense minister said French troops had fought the day before with Islamic extremists firing rocket launchers outside Gao. One of the rockets landed in a residential neighborhood.

On a trash-strewn lawn amid empty tin cans of meat and used plastic bottles, Malian soldiers warned people to stay away after heavy-duty explosives were found amid the debris.

The stash of NITRAM 5 explosives was hidden inside rice bags that were left in a communal trash area. The explosives are manufactured for use in mining, but can cause considerable damage when used as bombs.

France's defense minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, said troops have found "preparations for a true terrorist sanctuary," including war materiel, weapons manuals and makeshift laboratories for constructing improvised explosive devices.

"It's a real war. ... When we go outside of the center of cities that have been taken, we meet residual jihadists," Le Drian said Wednesday on Europe-1 radio.

French aircraft are continuing air strikes every night on suspected militant arms depots and mine-making sites, he said.

Meanwhile, French President Francois Hollande said France may start pulling out of this vast nation in northwest Africa at the end of March.

Government spokeswoman Najat Vallaud-Belkacem said in Paris Wednesday that the withdrawal will depend on an increase in the deployment of African forces, which are meant to take over the international effort to secure Mali and help its weak army keep the peace.

The U.N. Security Council probably will wait until the end of February to adopt a new resolution authorizing a U.N. peacekeeping force for Mali, a well-informed U.N. diplomat said.

Trouble began last year in Mali, once a stable democracy in West Africa, with the latest in a series of rebellions by Tuareg nomads fighting for a separate nation in the north. The Malian army staged a coup in the faraway capital, Bamako, and in the chaos that followed, the Tuaregs and Islamic extremists made rapid advances, seizing the main cities in northern Mali. Poorly armed and demoralized Malian soldiers fled before their advance.



But the secular fighters fell out with the Islamist extremists. As the extremists have fled the French bombing campaign, it appears the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad fighters have moved back into some areas. Azawad is what the Tuaregs call their homeland.

They have said they are willing to work with the French forces but not Malian troops, whom they accuse of committing reprisals against the lighter-skinned Tuaregs and Arabs.



AFRICOM

18. [Attack, Mali] Suicide Bombing In Mali; Soldiers Allied With Coup Leader Attack Camp Of Presidential Guard

Friday, February 8 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/french-troops-begin-withdrawal-from-timbuktu-ramp-up-security-in-other-north-mali-city/2013/02/07/65409372-7186-11e2-b3f3-b263d708ca37_story.html

A suicide bomber hit a checkpoint in northern Mali on Friday, killing only himself in the first known suicide bombing since French military forces intervened in this chaotic African nation whose northern half was ruled by armed Islamic extremists.

And in the capital Bamako, far to the south, soldiers from a unit allied with the leader of last year's military coup in Mali stormed the camp of the Red Beret presidential guard Friday morning, and at least one person was killed and five were wounded, witnesses said. The bloodshed underscores that Mali's military is in disarray and in poor shape to confront, without outside help, the well-armed Islamic extremists, many of whom have combat experience. The suicide bombing happened in the city of Gao, which was occupied by armed Islamic extremists until French-led military forces pushed them out. It was the first known suicide bombing in Mali since France started its military intervention on Jan. 11.

Malian military spokesman Modibo Traore confirmed that a suicide bomber attacked a checkpoint at the entrance to Gao around 6 a.m. on Friday. The bomber, who was wearing an explosive belt, was the only casualty. The bomber was on a motorcycle and blew himself up just before a Malian military checkpoint on the edge of Gao. Officials at a French military base in Gao declined to comment on the attack.

Friday afternoon, Malian soldiers stood guard at a building near the scene of the attack, splattered in the bomber's blood. The only other evidence of the attack were the mangled, charred remains of his bike. The Malian soldiers said that nearby villagers had taken the man's remains away and buried them before sunset, as local Muslim custom.

Residents who heard the blast from their mud-walled homes on the dusty road nearby, said the attack occurred just after 6 a.m.

"It shook so loudly I thought it had hit my house," resident Agali Ouedraogo said.

Fears have been high of such attacks since the discovery of industrial-strength explosives earlier this week. French troops on Thursday were amping up security and searching out Islamic extremists who may be mixing among the population in Gao. On Tuesday, extremists fired rocket launchers at French troops near Gao.

Malian soldiers gave up towns in northern Mali with hardly a fight last year to insurgents, and then a military coup in the capital, led by a captain, disrupted the command system. Witnesses described a concerted effort by a unit allied with the coup leader to take the camp of the presidential guard in Bamako.

"Since 6 a.m., the soldiers arrived in armored cars and pickup trucks, all of them armed to the teeth to attack our base. The women and children tried to stop them from entering the camp. They shot tear gas at us and started shooting volleys in the air," said Batoma Dicko, a woman who lives in the military camp. The camp includes housing for military families.

Dr. Amadou Diallo, who works at the infirmary in the camp, known as Djicoroni Para Camp, said there was at least one dead and five wounded.

"A young man in his 20s was hit by a bullet in the head and he died on the spot. The bullet pierced his face through his right cheekbone, and came out through his neck. He was totally disfigured. There are also two women who were wounded, and three children, aged 11, 17 and around 15 years old."

The Red Berets were the elite presidential guard who protected former President Amadou Toumani Toure, who was toppled in a coup last March by junior officers. Green-bereted troops backed Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo, who seized power last year before ostensibly turning power back over to civilians, and they were the ones who attacked



the camp on Friday.

Soon after the coup, the camp has been attacked several times by the pro-coup soldiers. On earlier occasions, they disarmed the soldiers, and removed all of their artillery and ammunition.

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CENTCOM

19. [Attack, Iraq] Iraq Violence: 'Many Dead' In Kirkuk Police HQ Attack

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-21311931>

At least 16 people have been killed as suicide bombers and gunmen attacked a police HQ in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, medical sources say.

Officials said militants had tried to seize the compound after a bomb exploded at the gates, but were unsuccessful. A police chief was hurt.

No group has said it carried out the attack.

Kirkuk is ethnically mixed, and at the centre of a dispute between Baghdad and the Kurds over oil and land rights.

Sunni insurgents linked to al-Qaeda have been blamed for much of the recent violence in Iraq.

However, there has been a relative calm in recent days.

'Terrifying' explosion

The attack took place at around 09:15 local time (06:15 GMT) in the centre of Kirkuk.

"I saw a vehicle stop at the checkpoint at the main entrance, and the police started checking it," eyewitness Kosrat Hassan Karim told the AFP news agency.

"Suddenly, a loud explosion happened, it was terrifying."

Iraq map

Two militants reportedly dressed in police uniforms and armed with guns, grenades and suicide vests rushed the main gate of the headquarters after the bomb was detonated.

One was killed immediately by police. They tried to dismantle the other's suicide vest but were unsuccessful, so they shot him dead, reports said.

At least 90 people were injured including local police chief Brigadier Sarhad Qader and the press officer of the police directorate, whose conditions are described as critical. Both have been moved to a hospital in Irbil.

Firefighting chief Brig-Gen Naseh Mohammed put the death toll as high as 30.

The attack caused massive damage to nearby buildings.

Traffic in the city centre was stopped, and offices in the area were evacuated.

With its massive oil reserves, Kirkuk is the most bitterly contested of Iraq's disputed territories.

It houses a mixture of Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen.



The Kurds want to incorporate it into their largely autonomous region, while Arabs and Turkmen oppose any change to its current status, ruled directly from Baghdad.

Correspondents say militants often exploit differences between the Iraqi and Kurdish security forces by launching deadly attacks in the city.

Two weeks ago at least 10 people were killed in a suicide bomb attack on the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party in the city.

Days later, a suicide bomber killed at least 23 people at a Shia mosque in the nearby village of Tuz Khurmato, mainly populated by ethnic Turkmen.





CENTCOM

20. [Attack, Iraq] Nineteen Killed In Attack On Sunni Militia In Iraq

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/04/us-iraq-violence-idUSBRE91308T20130204>

A suicide bomber attacked a government-backed militia north of Baghdad on Monday, killing at least 19 people in an apparent attempt by Sunni insurgents to stoke unrest against Iraq's Shi'ite prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki.

Police said the bomber had infiltrated a meeting of Sahwa tribal fighters and detonated his explosives as they were gathering to pick up salaries in Taji, a town 20 km (12 miles) north of the capital.

The seventh suicide bombing in a month was part of an surge in violence a year after U.S. troops pulled out of the OPEC oil producer, where Shi'ite, Sunni and ethnic Kurdish factions still struggle over how to share power.

"We got a call they had been a huge blast on the Sahwa headquarters in Taji. The Sahwa were there to collect their pay," said local police commissioner Furat Faleh. "When we rushed to the hall ... people were lying bleeding all around and cash was scattered in pools of blood."

The Sahwa or "Sons of Iraq" are former Sunni insurgents who rebelled against al-Qaeda in the Sunni heartland province of Anbar at the height of the U.S.-led war and helped American troops to turn the tide of the conflict.

No group claimed responsibility for Monday's attack, but al Qaeda's affiliate, Islamic State of Iraq, has vowed to take back ground lost to American and U.S. forces, and has urged Iraqi Sunnis to rise up against Maliki's government.

A suicide bomber and gunmen killed at least 33 people in a huge blast at the police headquarters in the disputed northern oil city of Kirkuk on Sunday.

Maliki has been struggling to end mass protests by Sunni Muslims against what they see as marginalization of their sect since the fall of Saddam Hussein and the rise of Iraq's Shi'ite majority.

The Sunni unrest and the violence are compounding fears that the war in neighboring Syria - where Sunni rebels are battling to topple President Bashar al-Assad, an ally of Shi'ite Iran - could undermine Iraq's own delicate sectarian and ethnic balance.





CENTCOM

21. [Trend, Lebanon] Blast Reported Southern Lebanon Amid Israeli Mock Raids

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2013/02/04/264225.html>

A blast went off southern Lebanon late on Sunday reportedly after an electronic device exploded in the area, reported local media sources.

The Lebanese Future TV network said that an "Israeli aircraft might have detonated an electronic transmission device" in the southern area of al-Fawwar, reported naharnet.com.

"Hizbollah has cordoned off the area," Future TV added.

The NNA said that "Israeli aircraft did not leave the Lebanese airspace over the South all through the day," reported naharnet.com.



CENTCOM

22. [Attack, Iraq] Suicide Bomber Hits Iraq Army Checkpoint, Three Killed

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/02/05/iraq-violence-idINDEE91405W20130205>

A suicide bomber detonated a car packed with explosives at an Iraqi army checkpoint north of Baghdad on Tuesday, killing at least three people, police said, in an apparent attempt to destabilise the Shi'ite-led government.

The blast in Taji, 20 km (12 miles) north of the capital, followed another suicide attack in the same town a day earlier that killed at least 22 people.

It was the eighth suicide bombing in a month in Iraq, where insurgents are seeking to inflame tensions between Shi'ite, Sunni and ethnic Kurdish factions a year after U.S. troops pulled out of the country.

"There were patches of blood, pieces of clothing and shoes scattered around the place," said policeman Furat Fleh, whose patrol was near the checkpoint at the time of the blast. "We heard shooting and shouting after the explosion".

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shi'ite, has been struggling to quell mass protests by Sunni Muslims against what they see as the marginalisation of their sect since the fall of Saddam Hussein and the empowerment of Iraq's Shi'ite majority through the ballot box.

Ten years on from the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, sectarian and ethnic divisions run deep.

Violence has fallen from the height of inter-communal slaughter that killed tens of thousands in 2006-2007, but insurgents have still been carrying out at least one high-casualty attack a month since the U.S. withdrawal in December 2011.

Unrest in Iraq's Sunni heartland is compounding fears the war in neighbouring Syria - where Sunni rebels are fighting to topple a leader backed by Shi'ite Iran - could further upset Iraq's own delicate sectarian and ethnic balance.

Thousands of Sunni protesters have taken to the streets since late December, rallying mainly in the Sunni-dominated Anbar province where they have blocked a highway to Jordan and Syria.

Many demonstrators want the government to amend anti-terrorism laws that Sunnis believe authorities misuse to target them, but hardliners and Sunni Islamists have called for Maliki to step down and even for an autonomous Sunni fiefdom inside Iraq.

Al Qaeda's Iraq affiliate, which views Shi'ites as apostates, last month called on Sunni protesters to take up arms against the government.

No group claimed responsibility for Tuesday's blast, but suicide bomb attacks are the hallmark of Iraq's local al Qaeda wing, Islamic State of Iraq, which has sent Sunni Islamist fighters and arms into Syria.

Iraq is home to a number of other Sunni insurgent groups.



CENTCOM

23. [Attack, Syria] 'Many Killed' In Syria Car Bombings

Wednesday, February 6 2013

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/02/20132695511608916.html>

At least 19 members of Syria's security forces have been killed in two suicide car bombings targeting a military intelligence headquarters in the south-central city of Palmyra, a watchdog said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that a number of other troops were also wounded, some in critical condition, after Wednesday's simultaneous attacks against the intelligence branch and a nearby security building.

It said rebel fighters attacked the buildings soon after the double blasts, while the army deployed security forces in the city renowned for its Roman ruins and which has been designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO.

A shootout around the intelligence buildings erupted after the bombings leaving eight civilians wounded as clashes broke out elsewhere in the central Homs province city.

Heavy fighting has also erupted in Damascus as rebels launched an offensive against President Bashar al-Assad's forces, breaking a lull in the conflict, opposition activists said.

Authorities in Damascus closed the main Abbasid Square and the Fares al-Khoury thoroughfare as fighters attacked roadblocks and fortifications with rocket-propelled grenades and mortars.

"The areas of Jobar, Zamalka, al-Zablatani and parts of Qaboun and the ring road have become a battleground," activist Fida Mohammad said from the district of Qaboun.

Another activist said an army tank stationed at the main al-Kabbas roadblock on the ring road had been destroyed. Residents reported explosions across the east and north of the capital.

In Jobar, a working-class Sunni Muslim area adjacent to Abbasid Square, mosque speakers chanted "God is Greatest" in support of opposition fighters who attacked roadblocks in the neighbourhood, activists told the Reuters news agency.

They said tanks stationed on the edge of the central district of Midan, just outside the walls of Old Damascus, shelled southern districts of the city.

Syrian state television said: "Our noble army is continuing its operations against the fighters in Irbeen, Zamalka and Harasta and Sbeineg, destroying the criminal lairs".

Assad's symbols of power came under attack in Palmyra, 220km northeast of Damascus, on the main road to the oil-producing east of the country.

A bomb destroyed part of the back wall of the military intelligence compound near the Roman-era ruins in the city and then a suicide car bomber drove through, detonating the vehicle and destroying parts of the facility, activists in Palmyra said.

Video footage, which could not be immediately verified, showed a large cloud of thick smoke rising in the city.

"The first car bomb struck at around six in the morning. The second one, which caused the larger explosion, broke through into the compound 10 minutes later," activist Abu al-Hassan said from the city.

He said tanks stationed in the compound fired shells in response into an adjacent residential neighbourhood, killing several civilians.

Roadblocks across the city also came under attack.

The state news agency said two "suicide terrorists" blew up cars packed with explosives near a garage in a residential district, killing and wounding several people. Among those killed was a woman, it said.

Street demonstrations against Assad's rule erupted in Palmyra at the beginning of the revolt almost two years ago. But the army has since tightened control of the city, which is situated near a major oil pipeline junction.

After a failed uprising in the 1980s led by the Muslim Brotherhood against the rule of Assad's father, the late Presi-



dent Hafez al-Assad, thousands of rebels were executed in a military jail in Palmyra. The United Nations say more than 60,000 people have been killed since conflict started in March 2011. At least 700,000 Syrians have fled their homes, seeking shelter in neighbouring countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and more than one million people have been displaced within Syria during 22 months of fighting, according to aid agencies.





CENTCOM

24. [Attack, Iraq] Iraq Bomb Blasts Kill At Least 36 On Market Day

Friday, February 8 2013

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57568323/iraq-bomb-blasts-kill-at-least-36-on-market-day/

Car bombs struck two outdoor markets and a group of taxi vans in Shiite areas across Iraq on Friday, killing at least 36 people and wounding nearly 100 in the bloodiest day in more than two months, as minority Sunnis staged large anti-government protests.

Sunni protesters have rejected calls to violence by an al Qaeda-linked group, but there is concern that Sunni insurgents could step up attacks ahead of the April 20 provincial elections — the first country-wide vote since the U.S. troop withdrawal more than a year ago.

On Friday, tens of thousands of Sunni protesters rallied in five major cities against Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite accused of monopolizing power. Sunnis also complain of official discrimination.

In the city of Samarra, rally speaker Sheik Mohammed Jumaa sent a warning to the prime minister. "Stop tyranny and oppression," he said. "We want our rights. You will witness what other tyrants have witnessed before you."

In the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi in restive Anbar province, demonstrators blocked the main highway to Jordan and performed Friday noon prayers, the highlight of the religious week. Anbar is a former al Qaeda stronghold that saw fierce fighting against U.S. forces.

Other rallies were held in the cities of Mosul and Tikrit, as part of weekly Sunni demonstrations that were sparked by the December arrests of bodyguards of a senior Sunni politician.

Earlier Friday, suspected Sunni insurgents detonated five car bombs, killing at least 36 people and wounding 97, health and police officials said. It was the bloodiest day of attacks since Nov. 29, when 43 people, many of them Shiite pilgrims, were killed in a wave of attacks.

Friday's bombings targeted an outdoor pet market in Baghdad's northern Kazimiyah neighborhood, a vegetable market in the town of Shomali in Hillah province, south of the Iraqi capital, and a stand for taxi vans on the edge of the southern city of Karbala.

The assailants targeted particularly crowded areas. Iraqis converge on markets every Friday, the Muslim day of rest, to shop and spend family time. The vans on the outskirts of Karbala were waiting for passengers returning from noon prayers at the city's Shiite shrines.

In Baghdad, the first car bomb exploded around mid-morning at the entrance to the Kazimiyah market, two police officers said. When panicked shoppers tried to flee the area, a second parked car exploded a few meters (yards) away, according to the officers.

The twin blasts turned several nearby cars into tangled piles of metal.

At least 17 people were killed and 45 were wounded in the two blasts, police said. All the victims were civilians.

About an hour later, two car bombs exploded simultaneously at the Shomali market, killing at least 14 people and wounding 36, two police officers said.

The car bomb on the edge of Karbala killed five and wounded 16, police said.

Health officials confirmed the casualty figures in each attack. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to





release information.

Violence has dropped in Iraq since the worst sectarian fighting in 2006-2007, but insurgents carry out near-daily attacks on security forces and civilians in an attempt to undermine the Shiite-led government.

The current spike comes just over two months ahead of the provincial election.

Hadi Jalo, an analyst at the Baghdad-based Political Decision Center for Strategic Studies, said he believes al Qaeda-linked militants in Iraq are trying to exploit the growing Sunni discontent.

"I believe that with this fertile atmosphere there will be more attacks ahead of the provincial elections," he said.



EUCOM

25. [Trend, Turkey] Leftist Terror Group Claims Responsibility For U.S. Embassy Bombing

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/02/02/world/turkey-embassy-bombing>

A radical leftist terror group has claimed responsibility for Friday's suicide bombing at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, which killed a Turkish guard and wounded a television journalist.

In a statement on its website, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party, or DHKP-C, said "E. Alisan Sanli has become a martyr after accomplishing the action on the American Embassy in Ankara." The governor's office on Saturday confirmed his identity through forensic testing.

Authorities have since detained three people for questioning over the attack and continue to investigate, according to the semi-official Anadolu news agency.

"We are going to build the future with sacrifices," said the militant group, which denounced U.S. foreign policy and criticized Turkey for its Western ties in a lengthy and at times rambling statement.

Sanli received bomb-making training somewhere in Europe in the mid-1990s, according to Hasan Selim Ozertem, a security expert at the International Strategic Research Organization in Ankara.

Turkish officials say that as a result of counterterrorism operations on Turkish soil, DHKP-C -- often described as having a Marxist-Leninist philosophy -- became increasingly active among the Turkish diaspora in Europe.

Sanli returned to Turkey in 1997 and was subsequently involved in attacks on the Istanbul police headquarters and senior military officials using anti-tank weapons. After being arrested, Sanli went on a lengthy hunger strike and was released from jail in 2002 because of a neurological disorder.

The blast killed spurred security clampdowns at diplomatic facilities in Turkey, plus messages of condolences and solidarity.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called it a strike "against the peace and welfare of our country."

The violence reverberated well beyond Turkey's borders, especially in the nation whose embassy was targeted.

The spotlight on U.S. diplomatic installations was already intense after violence last September in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, where Ambassador Christopher Stevens was one of four Americans killed in Benghazi.



EUCOM

26. [Security, Northern Ireland] Viable Pipe Bomb Found In Carryduff

Monday, February 4 2013

http://www.4ni.co.uk/northern_ireland_news.asp?id=157830

Police have confirmed the device at the centre of a security alert in Carryduff on Saturday night was a viable pipe bomb.

A suspicious object was discovered at flats at Doon Park and a number of homes were evacuated.

Army experts attended the scene and made the device safe.

Alliance Cllr Geraldine Rice said: "Lives were put at risk by whoever is responsible for this pipe bomb. Anybody passing close by could have been severely injured or worse if it detonated.

"The people who left this bomb in such a residential area obviously have no regard for the consequences of their actions. There can be no justification for the actions of such a callous group of individuals.

"I would urge anybody with any information about this incident to contact the police."



EUCOM

27. [Security, Russia] Homemade Bomb Left Near Prison Service Headquarters In Ufa

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/homemade-bomb-left-near-prison-service-headquarters-in-ufa/474968.html>

A defunct bomb was found Sunday night near a Federal Prison Service building in the Bashkortostan capital of Ufa, Interfax reported Monday.

A "suspicious bag" was discovered near the building, prompting a visit from the police's bomb squad unit, who cordoned off the bag and examined it, the Interior Ministry's press service said.

The bag contained a Tupperware container with wires packed with just under a kilogram of explosives — ammonium nitrate powder and aluminum powder — as well as an electric detonator, a fuse and wires. But the device lacked fertilizer elements necessary to set off the bomb.

According to the prison service's regional website, the building where the bomb was discovered serves as headquarters for its regional branch.

A criminal case has been opened on charges of illegal manufacturing of weapons, which carries a maximum punishment of eight years in prison.



EUCOM

28. [Security, Ireland] Pipe Bomb Found In School Yard

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.independent.ie/breaking-news/national-news/pipe-bomb-found-in-school-yard-3376909.html>

A pipe bomb has been made safe after it was discovered on the edge of school grounds in Dublin.

Pupils and staff at Scoil Iosagain in Aughavannagh Road, Crumlin, were evacuated after the device was found.

Local sources said the bomb was found by a caretaker just inside the railings of the small school yard close to where young pupils would have been playing on their break.

Labour councillor Michael O'Sullivan said gardai must crack down on suspects in the area. "It's terrible and showed a complete disregard for children's safety," he said.

"It's really amazing nothing worse happened. If you are going to leave a bomb in a school yard you have no idea that it won't hurt any kids."

The Defence Forces bomb squad was called to the school on Monday morning before 10am.

"Students in the school were moved to a safe location during the operation. A cordon was also put in place for public safety," a spokesman said.

The Defence Forces described the device as a viable improvised explosive device (IED).

The explosive was made safe on the school grounds without a controlled explosion and the device was taken to a secure military location for further technical examination and testing. The scene was declared safe at 11.25am.

The device will be handed over to gardai for further investigation.



EUCOM

29. [Law Enforcement, Israel] IDF Exposes Improvised Explosive Device Near Jericho

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4340987,00.html>

An IDF unit exposed an improvised explosive device in a Palestinian vehicle near Jericho. The device was handles by a bomb disposal unit and those traveling in the vehicle were detained.



EUCOM

30. [Security, Turkey] Turkey Says It Knew Terrorist Attack Was Planned

Monday, February 4 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2013/02/04/world/europe/ap-eu-turkey-us-suicide-attack.html?_r=0

Turkish authorities suspected the outlawed leftist group that bombed the U.S. Embassy in Ankara was planning an attack, but did not have enough information to prevent it from happening, Turkey's president said Monday. The suicide bomber struck the U.S. Embassy on Friday, killing himself and a Turkish security guard and seriously wounding a former Turkish television journalist.

Turkish authorities said the bomber, Ecevit Sanli, was linked to the outlawed Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front, or DHKP-C, and the leftist group said it launched the attack to oppose U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

President Abdullah Gul said Turkish police and intelligence officials were on high alert about the DHKP-C, knowing it was planning an attack of some sort but didn't know where or when.

"Our security and intelligence organizations knew the terror organization was seeking to carry out an attack; they were on alert and had warned everyone," Gul said at a news conference. "But unfortunately it could not be prevented, and they carried out this attack against the U.S. Embassy."

The U.S. Embassy resumed business on Monday, and a minute of silence was held for the 46-year-old Turkish guard who died in the attack.

Turkey's state-run Anadolu news Agency said police have questioned 12 people in connection with the attack, including one who reportedly asked directions to Paris Street, where the side entrance to the embassy — the site of the attack — is located.

Quoting unidentified sources, Anadolu said Sanli posed as a courier, asked to be let in by showing an envelope, then detonated his explosives as soon as the gate to a security check point was opened.

Officials have said the bomber spent several years in prison on terrorism charges before being released on probation in 2001 after being diagnosed with a hunger-strike related disorder. They said he fled Turkey after his release. During a visit to the Czech Republic on Monday, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Sanli had been living in Germany and entered Turkey illegally to carry out the attack. Erdogan said it shows how important it is for Europe's allies to work together in the battle against terrorism, and he complained that several European countries, including Germany and France, were not responding to Turkish requests for the extradition of militants wanted by Turkey.

"We are not getting the support we need," Erdogan said. "Even those who have carried out the bloodiest of attacks are walking freely. Even though we present them with evidence, they are not being caught."

"We can no longer tolerate this lack of interest," Erdogan said.

For example, he accused France and Germany of ignoring Turkey's requests to extradite Sakine Cansiz, who had helped found the Kurdistan Workers Party, a rebel group seeking autonomy for Turkey's Kurds. She was one of three Kurdish activists who were gunned down in Paris last month.

DHKP-C has claimed responsibility for assassinations and bombings since the 1970s, but it has been relatively quiet in recent years. Compared to al-Qaida, it has not been seen as a strong terrorist threat.

In a statement posted on a website linked to the group, the DHKP-C said the United States was "responsible for every drop of blood shed all over the world" from "Iraq to Afghanistan, from Libya to Syria."

It accused Erdogan's government — which has become the Syrian regime's strongest critic — of being a "lackey of the imperialists" by trying to topple the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Friday's attack on the U.S. Embassy occurred as NATO deployed six Patriot anti-missile systems to protect its ally Turkey from a possible spillover from Syria's civil war. The U.S., Netherlands and Germany are each providing two Patriot batteries.



The suicide attack was the second deadly assault on a U.S. diplomatic post in five months.

On Sept. 11, 2012, terrorists attacked a U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya, killing U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans. The attackers in Libya were suspected to have ties to Islamist extremists, and one is in custody in Egypt.

U.S. diplomatic facilities in Turkey have been targeted previously by terrorists. In 2008, an attack blamed on al-Qaida-affiliated militants outside the U.S. Consulate.



EUCOM

31. [Security, Northern Ireland] Pipe Bomb Found In School Yard

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://uk.news.yahoo.com/pipe-bomb-found-school-yard-175636822.html>

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Local sources said the bomb was found by a caretaker just inside the railings of the small school yard close to where young pupils would have been playing on their break.

Labour councillor Michael O'Sullivan said gardai must crack down on suspects in the area. "It's terrible and showed a complete disregard for children's safety," he said.

"It's really amazing nothing worse happened. If you are going to leave a bomb in a school yard you have no idea that it won't hurt any kids."

The Defence Forces bomb squad was called to the school on Monday morning before 10am.

"Students in the school were moved to a safe location during the operation. A cordon was also put in place for public safety," a spokesman said.

The Defence Forces described the device as a viable improvised explosive device (IED).

The explosive was made safe on the school grounds without a controlled explosion and the device was taken to a secure military location for further technical examination and testing. The scene was declared safe at 11.25am.

The device will be handed over to gardai for further investigation.



EUCOM

32. [Attack, Serbia] Serbs Arrest Man For Bomb Incident

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://www.euronews.com/2013/02/05/serbs-arrest-man-for-bomb-incident/>

A Serbian man has been arrested in Mitrovica on suspicion of being involved in a bombing that injured two Serb children.

They were hurt during the night when what seems to be a hand grenade was thrown through their bedroom window.

Police say they found ammunition, a grenade similar to the one used in the attack, and a Kalashnikov at the suspect's house.

Mitrovica is a flashpoint near Kosovo's northern border with Serbia, where relations between Serbs and ethnic Albanians are continually on a knife-edge. Kosovo broke away from Serbia in 1999 aided by NATO, which has since run Kosovo as a ward with 6000 peacekeeping troops.

The Serb and Kosovan presidents are due to meet in Brussels on Wednesday for only the second time for EU-mediated talks designed to end the conflict and bring both closer to EU membership negotiations.



EUCOM

33. [Attack, Northern Ireland] Police Probe Petrol Bomb Attack

Wednesday, February 6 2013

<http://www.larnetimes.co.uk/news/local/police-probe-petrol-bomb-attack-1-4758323>

Detectives in Larne are investigating a petrol bomb attack on a house in the town on Wednesday, January 30.

The object was thrown at a house on Church Way shortly before 10.30pm, breaking a window and causing minor damage to the inside of the property.

Speaking to the Times the day after the incident, neighbours reported hearing a “loud bang”.

East Antrim MLA Stewart Dickson has condemned the attack and said the occupant had “a very lucky escape”.

He added: “This petrol bomb attack had the potential to cause serious damage to the house and could have led to serious injury or worse.

“There can be absolutely no justification for carrying out an attack like this on a person’s home. We should be able to live in our own homes without the fear of this sort of incident.

“The people responsible for this attack clearly have no regard for the lives of others. If anybody has any information about this incident then I would urge them to contact the police.”





EUCOM

34. [Security, Spain] Police Defuse Bomb Inside Madrid Cathedral

Thursday, February 7 2013

<http://www.adn.com/2013/02/06/2780639/police-defuse-bomb-inside-madrid.html>

Spanish police on Thursday defused a homemade bomb found inside Madrid's most important church.

The bomb, comprising 200 grams of gunpowder and a kilogram of screws, was found inside the Almudena Cathedral, near the royal palace.

The church was evacuated, and police defused the bomb. The incident caused no injuries.

Police said the bomb was weak and roughly made. Its origin was being investigated.

The Almudena Cathedral is the seat of the Madrid archdiocese. It set the stage for the wedding of Crown Prince Felipe and journalist Letizia Ortiz in 2004.



EUCOM

35. [Trend, Northern Ireland] Device Found In South Belfast Was A 'Viable' Bomb

Friday, February 8 2013

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-21376298>

An explosive device found in south Belfast on Thursday evening was viable, police have said.

"It had the potential to cause serious harm," said Chief Inspector Gabriel Moran.

Several families had to leave their homes after the object was found at Kitchener Street.

"Many residents were older members of the community for whom this would have been distressing especially given the time of night," said CI Moran.

He asked anyone with information to talk to police.



EUCOM

36. [Law Enforcement, Ireland] Limerick Men Questioned About Explosives Find

Friday, February 8 2013

<http://www.limerickleader.ie/news/leader-local/limerick-men-questioned-about-explosives-find-1-4767486>

Two brothers from Limerick city are being questioned by gardai following the seizure of suspected rocket-launchers and other explosives in County Tipperary.

The two brothers were arrested along with another man, who is also from Limerick, late last night as part of an ongoing investigation into dissident Republican activity.

All three, who are aged in their 30s, were arrested on the N24 near Cahir during an operation involving members of the Special Detective Unit, other National Units and local gardai.

It is understood gardai from the Limerick division played a role in the operation.

A number of explosive devices were seized at the scene along with two cars - technical and ballistic examinations are ongoing,

The men are being detained under Section 30 of the Offences against the State Act at Clonmel and Cahir Garda Stations.



PACOM

37. [Attack, Indonesia] Four Low-Explosive “Bombs” Explode In Medan

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/02/03/four-low-explosive-bombs-explode-medan.html>

Four amateurishly assembled, low explosive “bombs” exploded in a trench in front of a house on Jl.Platina, Medan, early Saturday.

No injuries or deaths were reported from the blasts, but they alarmed people living very close by, who heard two distinct blasts. The first blast occurred at 1 a.m. on Saturday and the second explosion a few minutes later.

Titi Papan community leader Umar and witnesses went to the scene of the incident shortly after the first explosion and saw smoke and fire coming from the ditch.

“The bombs went off in the trench. I saw smoke from the explosions rising after the detonation,” he said.

North Sumatra deputy police chief Brig.Gen.Cornelis Hutagaol said the bomb was classified as low-explosive and the material was packed into hard plastic pipes.

“The bomb contained carbide as a detonator inside the pipes.” said Cornelis.

He said the bombs were quite similar to those fishermen used in blast-fishing, but the police would investigate the incident.

“We have yet to establish who detonated the bombs and what their motives were,” said Cornelis.



PACOM

38. [Security, India] Security Forces Seize Cache Of Explosives In Jharkhand

Sunday, February 3 2013

<http://in.news.yahoo.com/security-forces-seize-cache-explosives-jharkhand-060731860.html>

Security forces have recovered a large cache of explosives during raids on Maoist hideouts in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district.

In a joint operation by the police of Ramgarh district and a bomb disposal squad from Ranchi, the recovery was made from the Kotre forest in the area.

"We received a tip-off about some militants having gathered here. We raided this place to verify the facts. In the course of the raid, we recovered four or five cane bombs, some power gel and 16-17 detonators. Apart from that, we have also recovered some wire and digging implements," said Ramgarh's Superintendent of Police (SP), Anish Gupta.

The cane bombs, weighing between two and five kilograms, were of great destructive potency. They were destroyed in controlled explosions by the bomb squad.

"The explosives recovered have great destructive power. They are enough to destroy a very big vehicle in one go," said bomb disposal official, Ravindra Singh.

Maoist insurgents have significantly increased their presence in tribal and rural regions in Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

The Maoists say they are fighting for the rights of millions of landless labourers and marginal farmers. However, the government has termed them to be India's main internal security threat.



PACOM

39. [Trend, Malaysia] Man Finds Bomb, Fails To Report To Authorities

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://www.nst.com.my/streets/johor/man-finds-bomb-fails-to-report-to-authorities-1.212323>

A scrap metal collector was happy to find a chunk of metal partly buried in the ground at a construction site in Kampung Semangat here, recently.

Tan Kim See, 36, said he thought he was going to make a lot of money out of the piece of metal as he had expected it to be heavy.

However, when he started digging to remove it, he discovered that it was a World War 2 bomb. Fearing that may still be active, Tan hurried off to tell the villagers of his find.

"Unfortunately, no one believed me, and accused me of crying wolf. I did not know who else to inform of my find. Even when I asked the villagers to follow me to the site to prove that I was telling them the truth, they just ignored me," he said.

A week later, Tan was relieved to see the police and bomb squad trucks at the site where he found the bomb. He thinks someone else must have found the bomb and alerted the authorities.

"The villagers only realised that I was telling them the truth when the bomb squad officers arrived in full gear on Wednesday," Tan said, adding many had asked how he found the bomb, and that he had to repeat his story several times.

Meanwhile, Johor Baru (north) police chief Assistant Commissioner Ruslan Hassan confirmed that a bomb squad was dispatched to the scene.

The bomb was taken to Sungai Maju in Kempas where it was denoted at 3pm on Wednesday, about two hours after the bomb squad was called in.

They could not denote it at the scene, as there were houses nearby and it was deemed dangerous.

"We believe the bomb was unearth when contractors were doing piling works," Ruslan said.

Asked if he knew that Tan had found the bomb a week earlier and did not inform the police, Ruslan said police arrived at the scene immediately after they were told of the bomb.

He also advised the public to call Johor police's 24-hour emergency hotline at 07-221 2999 if they find objects that they believe that may be a bomb.

Tan said: "The next time I tell the villagers anything, I am sure they will believe me. I have written down the hotline number and kept it safely in my wallet. The next time I find a bomb, I will call the police."



NORTHCOM

40. [Security, United States] Explosives Found In Hostage Bunker; Kidnapper Shot First

Tuesday, February 5 2013

http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/02/05/16855497-investigators-explosives-found-in-hostage-bunker-kidnapper-shot-first?lite

Federal investigators late Tuesday revealed that they have found explosives in the bunker where a 5-year-old Alabama boy was held hostage for nearly a week -- and that the kidnapper was killed only after opening fire first himself.

According to a law enforcement source close to the investigation, two explosives -- one inside the bunker and one in the ventilation pipe -- were found at the scene.

The source said four members of the rescue team approached the bunker's hatch Monday, where the captor, 65-year-old Jimmy Lee Dykes, was expecting a delivery.

He had received food and other items intended for the boy in previous days. This time, however, the team opened the hatch and dropped a "distractionary device" -- more commonly known as a flashbang.

Dykes was disoriented, but managed to fire off one shot.

The rescue team fired back -- shooting Dykes dead -- and saved the boy.

A law enforcement source close to the investigation confirmed to NBC News on Tuesday that federal agents had practiced their intricate rescue plans not far from where the kidnapper, Dykes, held the little boy.

Before storming the underground shelter where Dykes held the boy on Monday, the agents built a mock bunker nearby where they prepared over the prior six days, according to a law enforcement official close to the investigation.

Police had been in regular contact with Dykes since he took the young boy, identified only as Ethan, into the home-made bunker last Tuesday. Authorities passed medicine and toys including a red Hot Wheels car to the boy, who is said to have Asperger's syndrome and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and talked to Dykes through a PVC pipe that ran from the bunker into the yard.

Dykes had been reported to have electric heaters and blankets in his bunker, as well as electricity. But hope for a peaceful end to the standoff came to an end when negotiators began to fear that Dykes might pose an immediate threat to the young boy.

"Within the past 24 hours, negotiations deteriorated and Mr. Dykes was observed holding a gun," FBI Special Agent in Charge Stephen E. Richardson said at a press conference after the standoff ended. "At this point, FBI agents, fearing the child was in imminent danger, entered the bunker and rescued the child."

During a news conference with Alabama school officials, Donny Bynum, superintendent of Dale County Schools, says, "We have a long way to go. We have a healing process that we as a community must go through."

Law enforcement officials have said they even managed to sneak a camera into the roughly 8 feet by 6 feet bunker where Dykes holed up, but have declined to say how.

"It's a technique we may want to use again, so we're not being specific," an official told NBC News.

The final rush to bring Ethan to safety began suddenly on Monday afternoon.

Neighbor Byron Martin heard a boom that "made me jump off the ground." Local paper the Dothan Eagle reported two loud blasts after 3 p.m.

It seems the bang was the first -- and most audible -- sign to people in the area that Ethan's ordeal was close to an end. The flashbang explosive gave the FBI time to breach the bunker through a door at the top at 3:12 p.m. The boy emerged unharmed, according to officials.

The source said that law enforcement officials were still searching Dykes' 1.5 acre property in the rural Alabama community for explosives on Tuesday afternoon. Neighbors had described Dykes in the immediate aftermath of



the kidnapping as a paranoid Navy veteran who had beaten at least one neighborhood pet to death. And why Dykes decided to storm a school bus and take a hostage in the first place remained unclear to investigators. Dykes missed a court appearance on a menacing charge on Wednesday morning, the day after the kidnapping. Officials have not commented on whether that court appearance may have motivated Dykes.

“There are a variety of events that may have led to this,” the law enforcement source close to the investigation told NBC on Tuesday. “But they are very complex.”

NBC News can now confirm that Dykes asked negotiators to allow a TV reporter to interview him. A law enforcement source said while that request is an indication of Dykes' thirst for attention, the motive for the kidnapping is more complex, and officials will continue to investigate.

President Obama offered his thanks to the FBI on Monday night.

“This evening, the President called FBI director Robert Mueller to compliment him for the role federal law enforcement officers played in resolving the hostage situation in Alabama today,” a White House official said in a statement. “The President praised the exceptional coordination between state, local, and federal partners, and thanked all the law enforcement officials involved during the nearly week long ordeal for their roles in the successful rescue of the child.”

The young boy was “laughing, joking, playing, eating,” said Agent Richardson Monday. “He’s very brave, he’s very lucky. His success story is that he got out and he’d doing great.”

“If I could, I would do cartwheels all the way down the road,” Debra Cook, the boy’s aunt, told Good Morning America. “I was ecstatic.”

Ethan will celebrate his sixth birthday on Wednesday. Dale County School District officials have said that they are planning a celebration of Ethan’s birthday and the life of slain bus driver Charles Albert Poland, Jr. for another date.



NORTHCOM

41. [Law Enforcement, United States] Drug Suspect Accused Of Making Explosives

Thursday, February 7 2013

http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Drug-suspect-accused-of-making-explosives-4260544.php

A man arrested this week on a state drug charge made his first appearance in federal court today in connection with homemade explosive devices found at his far Northwest Side house.

Federico Aguilar, 51, was charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm or ammunition, and faces up to 10 years in prison.

The case stems from his arrest Monday, when Bexar County deputies served a search warrant at a house in the 7400 block of Hardesty.

Inside, deputies found methamphetamine packaged as if ready to sell, and charged Aguilar with a state count of possession with intent to distribute.

Investigators also found five "improvised explosive devices," so they called the San Antonio Police Department Bomb Squad and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the sheriff's office said.

A federal criminal complaint said the devices had bullets on them as shrapnel, and Aguilar admitted to agents that he made them.

The explosives were detonated in the backyard, officials said.

At today's hearing, U.S. Magistrate Judge Henry Bemporad ordered Aguilar held pending a bail hearing Feb. 20.



SOUTHCOM

42. [Attack, Colombia] Hand Grenade Injures Five In Medellin

Friday, February 1 2013

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/27961-hand-grenade-injures-five-in-medellin.html>

A hand grenade explosion has injured five people in Medellin's Comuna 8 district, local media reported on Friday.

Newspaper El Tiempo reported that criminals launched the hand grenade at a passing public transport bus, leaving three children and two adults injured.

The 8th Commune, located in the east of Colombia's second largest city, has suffered from high degrees of violence and forced displacement during 2012 due primarily to high levels of gang warfare.



SOUTHCOM

43. [Attack, Colombia] FARC Kills Three Soldiers In Mine Explosion In Western Colombia

Monday, February 4 2013

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/27998-farc-kills-3-soldiers-in-mine-explosion-in-western-colombia.html>

Colombia's largest rebel group, the FARC, on Sunday killed two Colombian soldiers and injured three more in a mine explosion in western Colombia.

At approximately 4PM on Sunday afternoon, the FARC allegedly detonated a bomb that had been placed in a mine located in the rural village of Puerto Frazadas two hours outside the municipality of Tulua in the Valle del Cauca department. The triggered explosion resulted in the deaths of two soldiers and left three others injured. According to Lieutenant Colonel Marco Antonio Castillo Velasco, the soldiers were performing tactical missions in the area when the bomb went off.

"The person in charge of this subversive action," said the colonel, "was [FARC] ringleader [alias] Cesar Muelas. For now we will continue with [our] efforts to dismantle this structure [the FARC column known as] Victor Saavedra."

The colonel also called the deceased soldiers "heroes of our National army."



SOUTHCOM

44. [Attack, Colombia] 'FARC' Kills Policeman In Southwest Colombia

Tuesday, February 5 2013

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/28011-farc-kills-policeman-in-southwest-colombia.html>

A group of armed men posing as soldiers on Monday killed one policeman and injured another after assaulting a police station for 45 minutes in southwestern Colombia.

According to eye witness accounts, the armed men allegedly arrived in the town of Nataga in the southwestern department of Huila in a white van where they stopped in front of the police station. Moments later they opened fire.

"They left an explosive charge in front of the station, which was activated minutes after," recounted regional police commander General Omar Rubiano.

The investigation into who was behind the attack is ongoing, however, Rubiano's initial reaction was that the FARC, Colombia's largest left-wing insurgent group, was responsible. The FARC's sixth front is known to be active in the region.

"Our initial hypotheses would suggest that the FARC's 6th Front is responsible for the terrorist attack," said Rubiano.

FARC guerrillas on Monday allegedly attacked a police patrol in the Antioquia department. Four policemen were traveling on two motorcycles when two frag grenades were thrown into their path killing two and wounding two others. Additionally, another four police officers were wounded by a grenade supposedly thrown by a FARC guerrilla.

Since the FARC announced the termination of their unilateral ceasefire on January 20, the rebel force has unleashed a vigorous offensive against Colombia's security forces with attacks occurring almost daily.

The Colombian government and the FARC are currently in the midst of peace talks in Cuba's capital of Havana. Should the talks be successful, Colombia's nearly 50-year-long internal conflict may finally come to an end.



SOUTHCOM

45. [Special Interest, Colombia] Leaked FARC Documents Reveal Uribe Assassination Plot

Wednesday, February 6 2013

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/28031-leaked-farc-documents-reveal-uribe-assassination-plot.html>

Newly released documents from the computer of a deceased guerrilla commander revealed plans to car bomb former Colombian president Alvaro Uribe.

Among the hundreds of documents that on Tuesday were leaked by Analisis24.com, an Argentine website, is evidence that the FARC was planning to attack a convoy carrying then-president Alvaro Uribe in the heart of Bogota, "regardless of the number of casualties" that might come as collateral from the bomb. The uncovered documents also describe how female guerrillas were forced to have abortions and small offenses such as the loss of a bullet were grounds for execution. Also released was a letter from the FARC secretariat to current Nicaraguan autocrat Daniel Ortega thanking the latter for harboring Colombian rebels.

After a 2010 bombing strike killed "Mono Jojoy," Eastern Bloc commander of the FARC -- Colombia's largest left-wing insurgency -- authorities recovered highly incriminating files from the commander's computer that have since been periodically released for legal and political purposes.

In the past, the computer files have been used to charge alleged FARC co-conspirators.



SOUTHCOM

46. [Attack, Colombia] 'Terrorist Attack' In Central Colombia City

Friday, February 8 2013

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/28069-terrorist-attack-in-central-colombia-city.html>

A motorcycle bomb exploded on Thursday night in the central Colombia city of Neiva, leaving a child and an adult wounded.

According to police, two men arrived on motorcycle and left an explosive package close to a military police checkpoint. However, the explosion did not cause casualties among the military personnel, instead it wounded two civilians.

According to a local Huila newspaper, the two men fired warning shots into the air and ordered civilians in the area to leave before detonating the bomb.

The two wounded civilians were being treated at a local hospital as of Friday morning.

Authorities did not speculate on the background of the perpetrators.

Neiva, located in the south-central Huila department, has in the recent past been hit by attacks from FARC rebels. The city sees the presence of several FARC units, among them the urban Manuelita Saenz Company.