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## *Afghan Defense Ministry Confirms Civilians Killed in Kunduz Airstrike*

Afghan forces carried out an airstrike outside of the northern city of Kunduz on Thursday, hitting and killing a significant number of civilians, including women and children. The Afghan Defense Ministry confirmed the incident, and says the investigation is still ongoing.

Details are still emerging, but Afghan forces were conducting a ground operation in Char Dara District when they called in airstrikes. Afghan officials say “more than 10” civilians died in the strikes, and some officials said it could be “as many as 14.”



The Taliban issued their own statement on the incident, claiming 28 civilians were killed, and blaming US forces for the deaths. The US command in Kabul says their aircraft do not appear to have been involved in the incident, and Afghan Defense Ministry statements seem to affirm this was an Afghan operation.

Fighting is increasingly intense in several parts of Afghanistan, including Kunduz, and the UN reported recently that civilian deaths in Afghanistan are at record highs this year. Thursday's incident shows that this is only continuing.