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US assassination drone goes down in eastern Afghanistan

Sun Jun 17, 2012

A US unmanned aerial vehicle has crashed in Afghanistan's eastern province of Paktia.

The Western military alliance, NATO, confirmed the Sunday incident, saying the drone went down due to technical problems.

However, the Taliban have claimed responsibility for the crash.

Washington has been using its assassination drones in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia, claiming that it is targeting militants, but civilians have been killed in the assaults.

The aerial attacks were initiated by former US President George W. Bush but have been escalated under President Barack Obama.

The US-led invasion of Afghanistan was launched in 2001. The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but insecurity continues to rise across the country, despite the presence of about 130,000 foreign troops.

Overall, 3,021 civilians died in violence related to the war and 4,507 were injured in 2011. Of the deaths, the UN attributed 77 percent to militant attacks and 14 percent to US-led foreign troops and Afghan forces. Nine percent of the cases were classified as unknown.