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Up to 60 killed in Afghan violence within two days

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Up to 60 people have been killed in Taliban-led attacks and counter-attacks across the war-torn Afghanistan since Monday morning.

In the latest violent incidents, Taliban insurgents, who have been waging more than a decade-long insurgency, launched two attacks on two joint Afghan and NATO bases in southern Kandahar province early Tuesday morning, leaving 14 people including three Afghan policemen and 11 attackers dead, authorities said.

"Four militant wearing police uniform armed with suicide vests and weapons raided a joint check post of Afghan forces and international troops in Dand district, the outskirt area of provincial capital Kandahar city, at around 6 a.m. local time Tuesday," a spokesman for provincial government Jawid Faisal told Xinhua.

The Afghan policemen engaged the assailants shortly after the attack, killing all four attackers, he said, adding "three Afghan National Police members were also killed and seven other policemen were injured during the clash."

Hours earlier, seven Taliban insurgents were killed when they launched an attack on a NATO military camp in Kandahar's Shah Wali Kot district, police chief of the district Padshah Khan told Xinhua.

At least 10 soldiers with the NATO-led coalition were injured in the attack that occurred at around 3:30 a.m. local time, he said.

Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks. Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, a Taliban purported spokesman, told local media that the outfit militants launched two attacks in Kandahar killing several Afghan and foreign soldiers on Tuesday morning.

Militancy has been on constant rise since the Taliban launched its spring offensive on May 3 this year.

A U.S. soldier with the NATO-led coalition forces was killed Monday when three men in Afghan police uniform opened fire in Kandahar's Zhari district, according to a statement issued by coalition.

In neighboring Helmand province, a total of eight civilians were killed and five other injured when their vehicle ran over a roadside bomb on Monday evening, the country's Interior Ministry confirmed on Tuesday morning.

"Eight innocent civilians were killed and five other injured when a vehicle touched off a roadside bomb at around 4:00 p.m. local time Monday in Capahasia area of Musa Qala district," the ministry said in a statement.

Women and children were among the killed and injured, the statement said without disclosing more details.

It blamed Taliban for placing the roadside bomb in the far- flanged district.

Taliban militants have been largely relying on roadside bombing and suicide attacks in fighting Afghan security force and NATO-led troops based in Afghanistan, often causing civilian casualties.

Earlier Tuesday, gunmen shot and killed two district officials in eastern Nangarhar province.

"Head of anti-criminal police and an official with the district administration were killed by armed men when they were traveling from home to office at around 8:00 a.m. today," a provincial spokesman Ahmad Zia Abdulzai told Xinhua.

The Taliban insurgent group has warned the civilians to stay away from official gatherings, military convoys and centers regarded as the legitimate targets by militants besides warning people against supporting government and foreign troops.

Six people including two civilians and four Afghan Local Police (ALP) service members were killed when a bomb placed in a shop went off in a bazaar in Tagab district of eastern Kapisa province on Monday morning.

The blast also injured 17 other civilians and the likely target of the explosion might have been an ALP commander named Karimullah, who was killed in the blast along with his son and two other ALP policemen.

"I left home to buy dish washing liquid and cooking oil from the district marketplace but as I approached the bazaar I suddenly heard a big bang which sent a thick black smoke to the sky," a resident Mohammad Tahir told Xinhua.

Police vehicle rushed to the site and transported the injured to the district hospital shortly after the explosion, he said.

Meantime, the Afghan forces and NATO-led coalition continued to put pressure on militants across the country as a total of 27 Taliban insurgents have been killed and seven other detained in joint cleanup operations in different provinces.

"Afghan police, army and NATO-led coalition troops launched 10 clean-up operations in Kabul, Kunar, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Kunduz, Faryab, Badakhshan, Zabul, Paktika and Farah provinces, killing 27 armed Taliban insurgents and detaining seven other suspects over the past 24 hours," the Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement Tuesday morning.

Records kept by Xinhua, based on figures released by Interior Ministry, reveal that around 630 insurgents have been killed, over 130 wounded and more than 560 other detained since May 1 by joint forces.