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18 killed in Taliban attack in Afghanistan

9/4/2014

A Taliban attack on a government compound in Afghanistan's southeastern Ghazni Province has killed at least 18 people and injured over 150 others.

According to reports, the attackers targeted the building of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) with two truck bombs early on Thursday morning. The assailants then tried to storm the compound, where they engaged in heavy fighting with Afghan police.

Ghazni Governor Musa Khan Akbarzada said as many as 13 militants had attacked the government compound. He said bodies of eight attackers were found after the clashes with the police. It was not immediately clear if any of the security forces or civilians had been killed, but some reports say three civilians and one police officer were killed in the assault.

Local officials say the death toll is likely to increase as rescue teams are looking for more bodies at the site of the incident.

The Taliban have claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Taliban has targeted several government facilities in Afghanistan in recent months. On August 30, Taliban militants attacked an Afghan intelligence building in the eastern city of Jalalabad, leaving six people dead.

Recently, Taliban has stepped up its attacks against the Afghan government, foreign forces and civilians. The group has vowed to escalate the attacks on Afghan forces and US-led troops, their bases, diplomatic missions and vehicle convoys.

The United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror. The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but insecurity remains high across the country despite the presence of tens of thousands of US-led troops.