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IS suffers major blow in Afghanistan as 122 of its fighters killed in 24 hours

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Militants loyal to the ultra-extremist group of the Islamic State (IS) have suffered major setback as 122 fighters of the armed outfit have killed in the eastern Nangarhar province over the past 24 hours, spokesman for provincial government Attaullah Khogiani said Tuesday.

Afghan security forces in the wake of directive issued by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani have intensified pressure on IS insurgents, targeting the insurgent groups day and night, according to security officials.

President Ghani during his visit to the eastern region last week and visiting military commanders of Afghan army's 201 Silab Corps in Laghman province ordered them to eliminate "Islamic State fighters" from the region.

Since the tour of Ghani to the eastern region, the military crackdown has been increased on IS fighters in the eastern part of Afghanistan.

The government forces, according to security officials almost day and night pounded the militants' hideouts from the ground and air, mostly by unmanned planes.

In the latest crackdown against IS outfit, 122 militants have been killed in Achin district of Nangarhar province over the past 24 hours, spokesman for provincial government Attaullah Khogiani confirmed Tuesday.

According to Khogiani, 20 more IS fighters have been arrested in the operations which have been continuing.

Earlier, a key commander of the hardliner group Saad Emarati was killed in Kot district on Monday night and the headquarters of IS in Saribazar area has been captured and destroyed.

The IS group which began its activities in the mountainous areas of Nangarhar province in early 2015 has claimed the responsibility for a deadly suicide attack in Kabul on Saturday which had killed more than 80 people and injured around 300 others, ostensibly as reaction to mounting pressure on its fighters in the eastern region.

However, Afghan observers and military officials suggested that keeping on pressure would eventually smash IS outfit in Afghanistan.