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21 Afghan army soldiers killed in 25 days: official

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A total of 21 Afghan National Army soldiers have been killed in the past 25 days throughout the violence-hit Afghanistan, Defense Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

"Over the past 25 days, a total of 21 Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel have been killed in security incidents and conflicts all over the country," General Zahir Azimi told reporters in weekly press briefing here.

On fighting against Taliban, Azimi said some 99 to 100 insurgents had been killed in the operations conducted by Afghan and NATO-led forces in the country in the past 25 days.

He said security forces had also detained 245 militants over the same period of time.

Briefing reporters on the start of transition of security from more than 140,000 NATO and U.S. forces to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), Azimi said that President Hamid Karzai will announce the date and the provinces handed over to Afghan side in couple of days, the first batch of provinces where transition will begin.

"The training of ANA has been on track and the number of ANA has reached to more than 155,000 as we talk," Azimi added.

He said Afghan Defense Ministry expected Afghanistan's international partners to speed up efforts to equip and provide more assistance for training of ANSF.

According to Azimi, 726 ANA soldiers and officers have been killed in the past one year.