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Al Jazeera

US drone strikes kill many in Pakistan

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Three US missile strikes have killed at least 19 people in Pakistan's tribal areas along the Afghan border, local security officials have said.

The strikes on Monday came a day after at least 24 people were killed in an explosion in the northwestern town of Nowshera and another bombing at a bus stop near Peshawar.

The missile strikes took place near Wana, the main town in the South Waziristan tribal region, early on Monday morning.

Local intelligence officials confirmed the strikes. Al Jazeera correspondent Kamal Hyder, reporting from Islamabad, said that one strike targeted a compound, while another hit a madrassah (religious school).

Pakistani intelligence officials told the Associated Press that the third strike hit a vehicle that was travelling between the North and South Waziristan agencies. Five people are reported to have been killed in that attack.

The identities of those killed in the strikes were not immediately known.

Hyder said there were concerns that civilians could be among the dead.

The latest strikes come just three days after a suspected US drone strike killed Ilyas Kashmiri, a senior al-Qaeda commander, according to local officials.

Bakery bombing

On Sunday, a suicide bomber attacked a bakery in northwest Pakistan, killing 18 people and wounding 40 others, local police said.

Liaquat Ali Khan, a police official, said the attack occurred late in the evening in a neighbourhood inhabited by military personnel in the town of Nowshera.

At least two soldiers were among the dead.

It was the second bomb blast of the day. An earlier attack killed six people at a bus stop in the Matani area near the northwestern city of Peshawar.

Rescue workers and police combed the site strewn with debris from the explosion while the injured were taken to hospitals for treatment.

Local TV footage showed the twisted truck and other damaged vehicles scattered at the scene, while rescue workers rushed away the wounded.

Witness account

Malik Asif, a witness, said: "I was about at a distance of 30 yards when this blast occurred. I rushed here and I saw a woman lying here, and a man was lying on the other side. I picked them up," he said.

"There was smoke everywhere. I saw many other wounded lying there. Two of them died. They were confirmed dead. The other two, who were taken to hospital were with blown up body parts, they would have also died."

The Pakistani Taliban has claimed responsibility for the attack, Al Jazeera's Hyder reported. The group has carried out a string of attacks in Pakistan since Osama bin Laden, the al-Qaeda leader, was killed in the Pakistani city of Abbotabad on May 2.