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CNN

## Taliban targets coalition base on eve of 9/11 anniversary

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As the 10th anniversary of al Qaeda's attack on the United States approaches, Taliban militants struck a coalition base in Afghanistan on Saturday, killing one person and wounding 10 others.

The truck bombing occurred in the central-east province of Wardak and all of the casualties were Afghan laborers, the Wardak governor's spokesman said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. NATO's International Security Assistance Force confirmed the attack was carried out by a Taliban suicide bomber.

The attacker was driving a truck carrying firewood and detonated his explosives at an entry point to the base, ISAF said in a statement.

"Most of the force of the explosion was absorbed by the protective barrier at the outpost entrance and though there were a significant number of injuries ... none is immediately life threatening," the statement said.

The attack comes as Gen. John R. Allen, commander of coalition and U.S. forces in Afghanistan, spoke about the 9/11 anniversary and the long war, saying that while "there is still much work to be done" in the fight against Taliban militants, "we will prevail."

Allen delivered remarks in a video issued Saturday by ISAF and praised the troops from the 49 nations serving in the ISAF coalition.

The protracted war began just a month after the al Qaeda terror network, sheltered at the time by the ruling Taliban militants, attacked the United States on September 11, 2001. U.S.-led forces kicked off Operation Enduring Freedom in October and ousted the Taliban.

Ever since, coalition and Afghan troops have been fighting the tenacious Taliban militants in the Afghan-Pakistani region.

Allen noted that "September 11 marks the 10th anniversary of an event that changed the world."

Ever since that day, he said, the troops have crippled insurgents and have honored the victims of terrorism worldwide. He said the coalition is committed to making sure Afghanistan is never again a safe haven for al Qaeda.

Three died following an insurgent attack in the east. Two died in separate incidents in the south, one following an insurgent attack and another after a bombing.

Their nationalities have not been released, and the precise locations of the incidents were not disclosed. They are among 12 service members who have died in Afghanistan this month. Of the others, five are Americans, one is Danish and another is French.

The coalition death toll in the war is nearing 2,700, according to a CNN count, with the United States sustaining most of the casualties in Operation Enduring Freedom.

August was the deadliest month for U.S. forces in Afghanistan since the conflict began. Seventy-one American troops died in August, topping July 2010, when 65 troops died, according to the CNN tally.

Many deaths took place on August 6 when insurgents shot down a helicopter in the eastern central province of Wardak.

Thirty U.S. service members -- including 17 Navy SEALs -- were killed in that attack, the single largest loss of life for U.S. troops since the Afghan war began in 2001.

The Taliban claimed militants downed the helicopter with a rocket-propelled grenade.

The surge in U.S. deaths comes as NATO is drawing down and handing over security control to national forces. Some 10,000 U.S. troops are scheduled to depart by year's end, with all U.S. military personnel out of Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

Also, Afghan and coalition troops killed several insurgents on Friday during a search for a Taliban leader in Logar province, ISAF said Saturday. The leader is responsible for roadside bombings on Afghan forces.

During the operation, insurgents armed with AK-47 assault rifles fired on the forces. The soldiers returned fire and killed them.

Logar's government spokesman also said the bodies of six road construction workers were found Friday night. They had been kidnapped on Wednesday and killed by the Taliban, Den Mohammad Darwish said.