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Thirteen killed in Afghan violence

1/20/2012

At least 13 people, including five Afghan border police, a Nato soldier and two would-be suicide bombers were killed across Afghanistan Saturday, officials said.

The border guards died when their vehicle was ambushed in Gulran district of Hirat province in western Afghanistan, General Sulaiman, the commander of rapid reaction forces in the area, told AFP.

“The vehicle first hit a roadside bomb and then the militants opened fire using grenade launchers and small arms,” he said.

The Nato soldier died in an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force said, without providing any further details.

Also on Saturday, a roadside bomb hit a civilian truck in Lashkar Gah, the capital city of volatile Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan, killing three civilians and wounding three others.

“They were labours going to their work in the morning when their truck hit the roadside bomb that killed three and wounded three others,” the provincial spokesman Daud Ahmadi said.

In southeastern Afghanistan, Afghan and Nato security forces shot dead four attackers attempting to target Barmal district chief office in Paktika province on Saturday, Mukhlis Afghan the provincial spokesman said.

“Two attackers had suicide vests on, but were killed before being able to detonate and two others were armed,” he said, adding that there were no other fatalities.

The east and southeastern regions of Afghanistan have been the focus of US-led coalition efforts recently, shifting from Taliban strongholds in the south towards the restive area along the border with Pakistan.