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Press Room

## 11 Taliban militants slain in Afghanistan

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Afghan security forces backed by US-led foreign troops have killed 11 Taliban militants and captured 51 during cleanup operations across the country over the course of 24 hours.

“The joint operations were conducted in Kabul, Nangarhar, Baghlan, Balkh, Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Khost, Paktia, and Ghazni provinces, during which seven other Taliban militants were injured,” the Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement issued on Saturday.

The Taliban have announced that their annual “spring offensive” across Afghanistan has begun and are threatening to target US-led NATO troops and their allies.

Code-named Al-Farouq, the primary targets of the offensive will be “foreign invaders, their advisors, their contractors, all those who help them militarily and in intelligence,” the militants said on their website.

“Al-Farouq spring offensive will be launched on May 3 all over Afghanistan,” the Taliban stated.

Insecurity continues to rise across Afghanistan, despite the presence of about 130,000 US-led forces in the war-torn country.

The United Nations announced on February 4 that 2011 was the deadliest year on record for Afghan civilians. The death toll rose eight percent compared to 2010 and was roughly double the figure for 2007.

Overall, 3,021 civilians died in violence related to the war and 4,507 were injured in 2011. Of the deaths, the UN attributed 77 percent to militant attacks and 14 percent to US-led foreign troops and Afghan forces. Nine percent of the cases were classified as unknown.