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Xinhua

Taliban-linked militancy claims 44 lives in Afghanistan

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The Taliban-linked insurgency and Afghan security forces' retaliations have left 44 people dead including 37 militants and seven police, officials said Wednesday.

In the latest wave of Taliban-linked militancy against government interests, seven policemen were killed and three others sustained injuries as roadside bombs struck police vans in the peaceful northern and the restive southern region on Wednesday, according to officials.

The first violent incident took place in Kunduz province, 250 km north of Afghan capital Kabul, when a mine planted by insurgents targeted a police vehicle killing three police on the spot in the rush hours Wednesday morning.

"It was a remote-controlled bomb that struck a police van when a convoy of police was passing Hazrat Sultan area in the provincial capital Kunduz city this morning as a result three personnel of Civil Order Police were martyred and three others sustained injuries," provincial police chief Samiullah Qatra told Xinhua.

He put the attack on Taliban militants. But the outfit fighting the government has yet to make comment.

About two hours later, two more blasts, also in the shape of roadside bomb went off in the Taliban hotbed of the southern Helmand province, killing four police, a local official confirmed.

"The first blast in the shape of roadside bombing took place in Musa Qala district bazaar at around 10:30 a.m. local time, fortunately caused no loss of life, but unfortunately the second blast which happened in a span of few minutes in Landi Nawi village of Musa Qala claimed the lives of four policemen," Daud Ahmadi, the spokesman for provincial governor, told Xinhua.

Ahmadi also blamed the enemies of peace, a term used against Taliban militants for organizing the attacks. However, the outfit has yet to make comment.

In addition, the Interior Ministry in a statement released on Wednesday morning claimed killing 37 anti-government militants since Tuesday morning.

According to the statement, the Afghan police and army backed by NATO-led coalition forces had killed 37 Taliban insurgents during a series of operations in different provinces over the past 24 hours.

"The joint forces carried out 12 cleanup operations in Kabul, Laghman, Parwan, Kunduz, Sari Pul, Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Farah provinces over the past 24 hours during which 37 armed Taliban insurgents have been killed, three others detained and 14 others were injured," the ministry detailed in the statement.