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40 Taliban militants killed in Afghanistan in 24 hours

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Afghan security forces have killed 40 Taliban militants during cleanup operations across the country over the course of the past 24 hours.

“Afghan forces launched the operations in Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Logar, Ghazni, Paktia, Herat, Bamyán, and Baghlan provinces, killing 40 Taliban militants over the past 24 hours,” the Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement issued on Saturday.

The Afghan government forces recovered ten machine guns along with a number of box magazines, three rocket launchers, 14 mines and hand grenades, 40 kilograms of explosives, and three motorcycles, which had been in the possession of the slain militants.

The statement did not mention whether there were any Afghan National Army casualties.

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

The United Nations announced on February 4 that 2011 was the deadliest on record for Afghan civilians. The death toll rose eight percent compared to the year before 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.