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12 civilians killed in Watapur airstrike

Sep 8, 2013



A dozen civilians, including children and women, were reportedly killed during a *NATO* airstrike that also left four Taliban insurgents dead on a vehicle in eastern Kunar province, officials said on Sunday.

Foreign troops bombed the pick-up truck carrying civilians after four insurgents boarded it on a road in the Watapur district on Saturday, Governor Shujaul Mulk Jalala told Pajhwok Afghan News. The dead included 12 civilians and four militants, he added.

Watapur district chief Yousuf Zalmai said the Taliban boarded the vehicle in a mountainous area.

Four women and four children were among those killed, he confirmed, saying a fifth child was seriously injured.

A Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid condemned the airstrike, saying all those killed and wounded civilians, including five women and seven children.

NATO-led International Security Assistance Force media office in Kabul confirmed Coalition Forces conducted “a precision strike” in Watahpur on Saturday, killing 10 enemy forces.

“At this time, we have no reports of any civilian casualties in regards to this incident. We are continuing to look into the incident and will provide updates as appropriate,” a NATO statement said. “We take all allegations of civilian casualties seriously.”

Many Arab and other foreign insurgents are believed to operate alongside the Afghan Taliban in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Police said the airstrike took place in Qoro village soon after three Arab and three Afghan militants boarded it Saturday evening.