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4 deminers killed in western Afghanistan

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Four Afghan deminers were killed, one injured and two others went missing following a Taliban attack on a mine clearance agency convoy in western Afghan province of Herat on Thursday, sources said.

The attack took place in the morning when the convoy was running to a demining site in Kohsan district, northwestern of provincial capital Herat city bordering [Iran](#), border police commander, Mohammad Juma Adeel, told Xinhua.

He said the victims were working in HALO Trust, a non- governmental agency, in charges of clearing mines and explosive remnants of war in the province, 640 km west of Afghan capital Kabul.

The militants fled the scene after the attack and security forces launched an operation to locate and rescue two missing men believed to be kidnapped by militants, the source said.

Thursday's attack is the second attack on mine clearer agencies this year.

On June 10, Taliban launched an attack on a demining site in eastern Logar province, killing eight people and injuring three others.

The Taliban insurgent group has intensified subversive activities as the country is preparing to take over the responsibility for its own security from foreign troops by the end of the year.

More than 51,000 NATO-led coalition troops, down from the peak of 130,000 in 2010, are stationed in Afghanistan, and the [United States](#) plans to trim its forces to less than 10,000 next year.

Afghanistan is one of the most mined countries in the world with thousands of mines laid in the ground during the three decades of war and conflicts.

More than 1,560 civilians were killed and nearly 3,290 others wounded in conflicts and Taliban-led attacks in the first six months of 2014, according to official figures released by UN mission in the country.