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US-led airstrike leaves dozen dead in S Afghanistan

8/7/2014



A dozen people have been killed in an airstrike by US-led foreign forces in the southern Afghan province of Helmand.

Local officials said the victims of the Thursday assault in the district of Marjah, situated 610 kilometers (360 miles) southwest of the capital Kabul, were senior Taliban commanders.

The Taliban has not commented on the airstrike and the casualties yet.

Earlier in the day, a similar US strike killed two people in the central province of Maidan Wardak.

The US-led forces have recently increased their air raids against civilian areas of Afghanistan.

On Wednesday, at least 20 people were killed after US-led foreign forces carried out repeated drone strikes in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nuristan, while another air raid in the country's eastern province of Ghazni left six others dead.

On August 1, more than 70 Taliban militants were killed in two air raids that struck Afghanistan's eastern provinces of Nangarhar and Logar.

Afghan police forces also said four other Taliban militants died in a US drone attack that hit the war-ravaged country's northeastern province of Kunar.

At least eight people were also killed after US-led forces carried out an airstrike in the southeastern province of Paktika on May 29.

Civilian casualties have long been a source of friction between the Afghan government and US-led forces, and have dramatically increased anti-US sentiments in the country.

The United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror. The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but insecurity continues to rise across the country, despite the presence of thousands of US-led troops.