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Taliban Kills Over 100 Afghan Police in Helmand Capital

By Jason Ditz
October 13, 2016

Adding to reports of the Taliban overrunning a band of police checkpoints around the outskirts of the Helmand capital city of Lashkar Gah, there was now reportedly an incident overnight Tuesday into Wednesday in which Taliban forces trapped and killed over 100 Afghan police in a single incident.

The Taliban has been pushing toward Lashkar Gah for months, as the Helmand Province is seen as hugely valuable to them because of its opium smuggling operations, which have long provided substantial money to the insurgency. The Taliban entered the city this week.

Reports are that the police in Helmand thought they'd negotiated a deal to get safe passage out of the contested area, and when they tried to flee out through the area that they believed was the safe withdrawal spot they were surrounded and killed by Taliban forces.

Such losses are mounting for Afghanistan's military too, but particularly for police, where the casualties are now said to exceed the recruitment by roughly 10,000 officers a year. While Afghan officials insist that the recruitment remains "steady," the growing losses are adding to Afghanistan's inability to field proper security around the many areas they are actively trying to defend from Taliban offensives.