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35 Road Workers Killed in East Afghanistan Ambush

By Jason Ditz

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Highway construction is an extremely dangerous job in Afghanistan. A nation with few decent roads, it has seen a flurry of Western-funded highway projects since the beginning of the NATO occupation in 2001.



Out in the middle of nowhere with only a small contingent of private security, the crews are ripe for ambushes, as happened Wednesday night in the Paktia Province, where Taliban forces attacked a crew [building a highway between Paktia and Khost, killing 35 workers](#) and wounding another 20.

The security guards for the company eventually arrived on the scene and engaged in a multi-hour gunbattle before the Taliban left. The company reported eight Taliban killed in the firefight.

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Bordering Pakistan's tribal areas, the Paktia and Khost Provinces are among the most dangerous places in Afghanistan. Attacks [against the road crews are common](#) near the border. Combined with the massive corruption across the nation it is one of the top reasons such roads never seem to be completed.