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Powerful blast kills six in Afghanistan

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At least six people have been killed and several others have been wounded in an explosion in troubled northern Afghanistan, officials say.

Afghan Police officials said that a bomb attached to a bicycle exploded in a market place in Konduz Province.

A police officer is among those killed in the blast. At least 22 others have been injured. Reports say that the death toll may rise as some of the victims are in critical condition. No person or group has claimed responsibility for the attack. However, provincial police authorities have blamed Taliban militants for the attack.

Hundreds of civilians have been killed in US-led operations or Taliban attacks in various parts of Afghanistan over the past few months, with Afghans becoming more outraged over the seemingly endless number of deadly assaults.

In a separate development, a US army helicopter has crashed in the southern Afghan province of Zabul.

NATO says the crash left no casualties and its cause is under investigation.

Taliban say they have brought down the aircraft. They also say all NATO service members onboard have been killed.

Southern Afghanistan is among the most volatile regions of the war-torn country. US-led foreign troops have suffered their heaviest casualties in those areas since the war began in 2001.

The war in Afghanistan, with civilian and military casualties at record highs, has become the longest war in US history.