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## 971 killed in Afghan conflict over past month

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Continued Taliban-led insurgency in the war-torn Afghanistan have claimed 971 lives including 618 Taliban militants, 229 civilians and 124 personnel of Afghan National Police (ANP) over the past month, spokesman of the Interior Ministry Zamarai Bashari said Sunday.

These casualties have been reported from July 23 to August 22, he said.

"Some 691 terrorist and violent incidents, most of them roadside bomb blasts took place, which indicates 33 percent decrease from the previous month," Bashari told a joint press conference with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) spokesman Brigadier-General Josef Blotz in the interior ministry compound.

He said that 434 Afghan civilians, 232 ANP personnel and 135 militants were also wounded over the same period.

According to Bashari, 593 Taliban and other anti-government militants had been arrested over the above period.

"Over 117,000 kg of explosive material including the banned ammonium nitrate used by Taliban militants in making Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and mines, had been seized by ANP in the past month," Bashari said.

Eighty-one operations against the drug smugglers had been launched by police and over 2,530 kg of narcotics were seized.

"Over 6,600 kg of chemical liquid used for making heroin and morphine were also seized by police," he added