

Drone Strikes Kill 120 Militants in Paktia'

GARDEZ - Police on Monday said 120 Taliban militants have been killed in Janikhel and Dand Patan districts of southeastern Paktia province, but the rebels disputed the claim.

The Taliban captured Janikhel district three days after weeks of clashes with security forces. Public representatives say Janikhel has a strategic importance and other districts could fall to the rebels if Janikhel is not retaken.

Paktia police chief Brig. Gen. Qadar Gul Zadran told Pajhwok Afghan News drones targeted militant hide-outs and convoys, leaving some 120 insurgents dead.

He did not directly said Janikhel district had been retaken, but said operations were underway to regain control of the district bordering Pakistan.

A security official, who wished to go unnamed, said the drone attack hit a



convoy of vehicles carrying militants in Janikhel.

Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, rejected the two drone attacks targeted the rebels in Janikhel and Dand Patan, but said they hit civilians.

He said one of the strike hit a religious school, killing a large number of pupils and the other struck elders who the Taliban had invited to hand them over the dead bodies of security personnel. The drone strike destroyed six civilian homes, he claimed.

Mujahid said the fighters avoided assembling in a single area due to the conflict because of possible airstrikes. The Taliban had laid siege to Janikhel for a few months before overrunning it a few days ago.

Before the district's fall, senior interior defence... (More on P4)...(10)

Woman, Child Among 3 Civilians Killed in Ghor Bomb Blast

FEROZKOH - At least three civilians have been killed and eight others wounded in a roadside bomb blast in the capital of western Ghor province, officials said on Monday.

The police crime branch chief told Pajhwok Afghan News the overnight explosion happened when a vehicle heading from Herat to Ghor struck a roadside bomb in Bara Khana area near Ferozkoh.

Abdul Hadi Chehel Ghorisaid a woman, a child and the coaster

driver were killed and eight others, including four children, three women and a man, injured in the roadside bombing. Ghor blamed the insurgents for planting the bomb as part of their campaign to target Afghan forces' convoys.

But the device hit the civilian vehicle, he said. Civil Hospital Director Dr. Juma Gul Yaqubi confirmed receiving three bodies and eight wounded people from the site. The condition of one of the injured is critical. (Pajhwok)

76 Taliban Militants Claimed Killed in Nangarhar Raid

JALALABAD - At least 76 militants were killed and another 37 wounded during ground and air operations by security forces in Chapparhar district of eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Monday, a claim rejected by the Taliban.

The governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, told Pajhwok Afghan News the operations were launched on Sunday night and continued into Monday morning in Spin Jumaat (mosque), Sparai and Sheen Kundai areas of the district.

At least 76 Taliban were killed and 37 others in-



jured and their weapons and ammunition seized by security forces, he said. But Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, said five fighters were killed and three others injured in the Spin Jumaat (White

Mosque) area. He claimed the fighters caused casualties to 20 foreign and domestic forces.

Zabihullah Zamarai, a member of the provincial council, said the Taliban ... (More on P4)...(11)

More Efforts Sought to Secure Kunduz

KUNDUZ CITY - Reports from Kunduz indicate that the Taliban has inched its way forward and are closer to security force outposts, but that military operations have not yet started to clear the area of insurgents.

TOLONews reporter Wali Aryan said he has talked with Afghan soldiers and that they have said further delays in conducting military operations on the outskirts of Kunduz city will create greater threats to that part of the province.

This comes after security forces kicked off a large-scale military operation to secure and reopen the Takhar-Kunduz highway. (Tolonews)

Taliban Gunmen Kidnap 5 Passengers in Uruzgan

TIRINKOT - Suspected militants kidnapped five passengers from vehicles on a highway in central Uruzgan province, officials said on Monday.

One of the passengers was released after the five were snatched from vehicles on the road between Chora and Gizab districts on Sunday, said Dost Muhammad Nayab, the governor's spokesman.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News the five passengers belonging to the Hazara tribe were civilians and they were heading home when Taliban kidnapped them in Khosh Qader area on the highway.

The official said four passen-



gers remained in captivity and their fate and where abouts were unknown.

Nayab believed the Taliban were kidnapping Hazara people because the Shiites were against rebel activities in their

areas. Uruzgan police chief Abdul Qawi Omari confirmed the incident and said one of the passengers was a policeman and the rest were civilians. He said... (More on P4)...(12)

2 Hostages Among 8 Killed in Parwan Airstrike

CHARIKAR - Six Taliban militants and two civilians the rebels had imprisoned were killed in a nighttime airstrike by security forces in central Parwan province, an official said on Sunday.

Abdul Wahid Sediqi, the Parwan governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News the airstrike was carried out in Shaheen Khel and Surkhi localities of Siyagard district on Saturday night at about 11pm, in which six militants and two men they had kidnapped were killed.

Sattar, an Afghan Local Police (ALP) commander in the district, confirmed the incident and said the army personnel had confiscated two dead bodies and the remaining were taken away by their comrades.

Taliban's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid rejected the fighters had been directed, saying the victims were civilians, but he had no exact figures for casualties. Two days ago, American forces raided a Taliban prison in Nad Ali district of southern Helmand province, killing 30 people, including 17 Afghan police and army personnel and seven civilians who had been held hostage by the insurgents. (Pajhwok)

13 Talibs Killed in CRU Raid in Parwan

PARWAN - The Ministry of Interior said on Monday that Crisis Response Unit (CRU) members carried out a successful night raid on Porki village of Seyagerd district in Parwan, killing at least 13 Taliban insurgents.

According to a statement issued by the MoI, among the dead were five suicide bombers and two Taliban commanders. The CRU members also seized light and heavy weapons during the operation, the MoI said.

According to the statement, the group had planned to launch a suicide attack in Parwan province. The operation ended with no casualties among CRU members or civilians. (Tolonews)

Blast in Ghor Kills three, Wounds Eight Others

GHOR - An explosion in Ghor province early Monday left at least three civilians dead and eight others wounded, officials said.

Abdulhai Khatibi, the provincial governor's spokesman, said the blast took place near Ferozkoh city of Ghor when a civilian vehicle, traveling from Herat province towards Ghor, hit a road side mine. Women and children are among the victims, Khatibi added.

The injured have been transferred to a nearby hospital, he said. No group has claimed responsibility as yet. (Tolonews)

Media Condemns NDS's Action During Bamiyan Protest

BAMIYAN - Members of the media on Monday strongly condemned violence by National Directorate of Security (NDS) personnel against journalists covering an anti-government demonstration in Bamiyan in central Afghanistan. The incident took place during Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's visit to the province. According to NAI (an NGO Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan), security forces also tried to arrest some journalists - however they failed to do so. Sayed Mohammad Hashemi of Jumhoor News Agency, Ilyas Tahir of Radio



Watandar, Najibullah Ulfat of local radio Nasim, Eshaq Akrami of Killid and Abbas Nadiri were among the journalists who were beaten by NDS personnel while covering the demonstration which

was in protest over government policies, said NAI in a statement. The security forces also confiscated cameras; mobile phones and other equipment belonging to journalists, said NAI... (More on P4)...(13)

Takhar's Hazar Sumuch District Lacks Health Services

TALOQAN - The residents of Hazar Sumuch district in northeastern Takhar province complain about their lack of access to health facilities as patients sometimes die on the way to hospital in the district's centre.

Sher Ahmad, a resident of Shor Qodoq village, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "We transfer our patients by donkeys to the district hospital; we travel for five hours to reach the district centre due a run-down condition of the road."

Shabir Ahmad, a resident of Pust Moghal area of the district, said they did not take their women and children to hospital if they suffered from seasonal diseases in winter and summer.

He said they took their patients



to hospital when their condition worsened due to the long distance between the village and the district centre.

"My little son was ill, I took him to doctors in the district center after his condition got serious, the doctors referred him to Taloqan and then to Kabul, I nearly lost my

son," he said.

These residents asked the central government to build a second healthcare center in the district to resolve the problem.

Meanwhile, Hazar Sumuch district chief Basir Baig said people living in villages faced many problems... (More on P4)...(14)

Civilians Among 5 Dead in 3 Herat Roadside Explosions

HERAT CITY - Two civilians and three militants were killed in three separate roadside explosions in the Shindand district of western Herat province on Monday, an official said.

Police Spokesman, Abdul Rauf Ahmadi, told Pajhwok Afghan News the three roadside explosions took place in Bakhtabad, Gardna Mazar and Zerkoh localities early morning.

Two civilians and one militant were killed when the Taliban vehicle struck a roadside bomb in Bakhtabad district.

The Taliban were shifting the two civilians for self-styled court trial when the incident occurred.

Tor Muhammad Zarifi, a tribal elder of Shindand district, said the Taliban were taking the civilians for a trial in their court in Zerkoh area.

Separately, two motorcyclists Taliban were killed in a landmine explosion in Zerkoh area, according to Ahmadi. Three more civilians were wounded when the third explosion hit their motorcycle in... (More on P4)...(16)

Security Men Among 4 Killed in Badakhshan Clash

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Two security officials and as many Taliban militants were killed on Monday during a clash in northeastern Badakhshan province, an official said.

Two motorcyclists opened fire at security officials at the gate of Dawlatabad district bazaar, killing

a policeman and an intelligence official. Police spokesman Sher Jan Durrani told Pajhwok Afghan News the incident took place at 11am during Monday's special bazaar when security forces were maintaining security for the weekly event. The two attackers were

killed after other security forces retaliated, Durrani said. Abdul Karim, a resident of the area, said police were checking when came under fire. He said he saw the dead bodies of the two attackers. The Taliban have not yet commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

Kidnapped District Executive Director Shot Dead by Taliban

PUL-I-ALAM - The executive director for the Baraki Barak district of central Logar province has been shot dead after kidnapped by Taliban militants, an official said on Monday.

Baraki Barak district's administrative chief, Mohammad Rahim Amin,

told Pajhwok Afghan News that Sardar Mohammad was killed by militants on Sunday night.

"Sardar Mohammad was heading home from the district centre when seized by the insurgents in Barak Rajan area last evening," he said. The official was handcuffed before

being sprayed with bullets. No one has been detained so far in connection with the incident. Amin added Sardar Mohammad had been serving as executive director of the district for the past five years. The Taliban have not yet commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

Balkh Women Wait in Town Square to Find Work

BALKH CITY - Every day dozens of desperate women wait for hours at a village square in Balkh province in the hope of finding work.

These women gather at what has become to be known as "Women's Square" in Yalmarb village south of Mazar-e-Sharif city. One of the women, 45-year-old Ozra, told TOLONews that every day she waits there in the hope of getting work so as to feed her six children. She said she is the only breadwinner in her house.

"We don't have anything at home so I am working to make a living to feed my children," Ozra said. "I come here to find work because I have to support my children," said Fahima an-

other needy woman.

According to these women, they are desperate and are not even able to send their children to school.

"I have an eight-year-old son who is sick and that is why I am working to collect money for my son's treatment," said Hamida, another needy woman.

These women criticized government for not providing jobs and said it was a big shame for the National Unity Government (NUG) that they have to sit in a square waiting for work.

According to them, these women get work from factory owners and farmers and earn between 100 and 120 Afs a day.

But another woman, Zahra said: "We wait here close to the road and some... (More on P4)...(15)