

Beat: Politics

NATO airstrike kills Taliban fighters attacking Afghan forces

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USPA News - Four insurgents were killed in a coalition airstrike in southern Afghanistan on Friday after they attempted to ambush Afghan security forces, local officials said on Saturday, more than a week after another airstrike in the region killed as many as eight insurgents. The airstrike happened at around 11 p.m. local time on Friday after a group of suspected Taliban insurgents ambushed Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) between two police posts in the Tolokan area of Panjwai district in Kandahar province, which is located in Afghanistan's volatile southern region that was the birthplace of the Taliban movement two decades ago.

The governor's office said four suspected Taliban insurgents were killed after Afghan security forces requested an airstrike by coalition forces. "Afghan Local Police went to the spot after the strike and confiscated a PK and an AK-47 which were the remaining of the 4 Taliban killed in the strike," a spokesperson said. First lieutenant Annmarie Annicelli, a spokeswoman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), confirmed its forces carried out an airstrike, but put the number of insurgents killed at three. "We can confirm a precision strike killed three enemies of Afghanistan in the Panjwai district of Kandahar province on June 28," she said, declining to provide other details. Friday's airstrike came just over a week after coalition forces carried out an airstrike on a highway in the Shahwali Koot District of Kandahar province, killing as many as eight suspected Taliban insurgents. The governor's office said the insurgents were planning roadside bombs on the highway, which links Kandahar to neighboring Uruzgan province. Earlier this month, Afghan President Hamid Karzai announced the fifth and final phase of security transition in which coalition forces hand over control of the remaining 95 districts - including Taliban stronghold areas in the south and east - to Afghan security forces. ISAF will still be responsible for military air support as well as support in combat operations until the end of 2014.

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