

Beat: News

Taliban insurgents attack U.S. base along key Afghan supply route

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USPA News - A group of heavily-armed insurgents attacked a U.S. base in eastern Afghanistan on early Monday, destroying dozens of vehicles and shutting down a key road used by NATO supply trucks, officials said, adding there were no casualties. The attack began at approximately 6:30 a.m. local time when three suspected Taliban insurgents, all of them wearing Afghan border police uniforms, entered the parking lot of a joint forward operating base in Torkham, a town located on the Pakistani border in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

"Our initial assessment of this morning's events, which occurred in the vicinity of a forward operating base located in Nangarhar province, is that it was an attempted but unsuccessful coordinated attack by enemy forces," a spokesperson for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said. The coalition said all three insurgents were killed during their attack, but emphasized there were no fatalities among ISAF service members. The force generally does not disclose whether ISAF service members were injured, but there were also no reports of fatalities or injuries among either Afghan forces or local civilians. And although there were no casualties, the insurgents were able to set off a number of explosives, destroying dozens of parked fuel tanks and supply vehicles. A firefight with Afghan and ISAF forces continued for more than three hours but eventually came to an end when all three attackers were shot dead from a NATO helicopter, according to provincial officials. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for Monday's attack, which he said resulted in 166 tanks and 94 supply vehicles being destroyed. The figure was rejected by a district police official who said no tanks were destroyed, and the Taliban are known to frequently exaggerate details for propaganda purposes. "After five hours of firefight and a series of explosions, the three brave Mujahideen (Taliban fighters) destroyed as many as 154 armored personnel carriers, 12 mine clearing tanks, 85 trailer trucks and 9 container trucks filled with important and advanced military gears and arms," the spokesman said. In an e-mailed statement, Mujahid added: "The operation came to an end after the three lions of Islam, fighting courageously with true spirits of faith and sacrifice and having achieved what they had come for, embraced martyrdom. Surely we belong to Allah and to Him will we return." The nearby highway, which connects the provincial capital of Jalalabad to the Afghan-Pakistani border crossing in Torkham, was closed for several hours as the attack continued. The road is an important route for NATO supply trucks which are often the target of attacks, but it was not known whether the closure caused any disruption.

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