

## Civilians, police, Taliban fighters dead

*by UPI*

KABUL, Afghanistan - More than 20 Taliban fighters who ambushed a coalition of U.S.-backed troops and Afghan police were killed Monday in southern Afghanistan, authorities said.

A coalition convoy called for air strikes to drive back the Taliban fighters after it was struck with two roadside bombs, rockets and gunfire in the Helmand province, the BBC reported.

Another Taliban ambush killed six Afghan police officers. A government spokesman told the BBC that several bombs exploded as the police were traveling in the southeastern Paktika province.

The BBC reported that there were also reports of Taliban suicide attacks in Kunar and the Kunduz province.

In the northern Afghanistan, witnesses said police killed at least five demonstrators at a rally in support of Uzbek leader Gen. Rashid Dostum, the BBC reported. About 1,000 Dostum supporters had attended the rally in Shiberghan.

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