

Up to 30 Taliban killed in Afghanistan

by UPI

KABUL, Afghanistan - Between 20 and 30 Taliban fighters were killed Tuesday when NATO helicopters sank their boat on the Helmand River in southern Afghanistan.

Gen. Zaher Azimi, an Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman, said the NATO aircraft fired on the boat after taking fire from the gunmen onboard the boat, The New York Times reported.

It was the second time within days a boat has been sunk on the river. About 60 people were on a vessel that sank Saturday. There were conflicting reports as to whether they were civilians or Taliban insurgents, the Times said.

Azimi also said Afghan troops were ambushed in Kandahar Province and that subsequent airstrikes killed 20 to 40 of the Taliban. Two Afghan soldiers were killed and three others wounded.

Meanwhile, a member of the Taliban said one of five Afghan health workers kidnapped two months ago had been beheaded because Afghan officials wouldn't release the body of Taliban commander Mullah Dadullah, who was killed last month. Afghan officials said they could not confirm the report but were ready to hand over Mullah Dadullah's body to his relatives without any conditions.

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