

Pakistan blast kills at least 40

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- An ammunition cache explosion in a northern Pakistani valley killed at least 40 people, including 30 Pakistani security personnel. The explosion, which came one day after Pakistan increased the number of troops in the area to improve security, took place in a truck of the Frontier Core, a paramilitary organization operated by the Pakistani government, KUNA, the Kuwait News Agency, reported Thursday. Some police sources said the explosion may have been triggered by a suicide bomber setting off a device near the truck. Sources said about 15 shops were destroyed by the blast and dozens of people were wounded, many of them critically. The blast followed the start of an operation that brought more than 2,000 troops to the northwest Swat region to enforce security where pro-Taliban militants are gaining strength. The new paramilitary troops will help set up barricades and checkpoints in the region, Voice of America reported. Pakistani military spokesman Maj. Gen. Wahid Arshad said the forces will provide security and ensure "this band of criminals is taken to task and they are prevented from terrorizing innocent people there."

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