

U.S.-led Drone Strikes Kill 18 in Eastern Afghanistan



Kabul, February 5 (RHC)-- At least 18 people have lost their lives when U.S.-led foreign forces carried out a string of drone strikes in Afghanistan's eastern province of Paktika.

A provincial security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Thursday that the Wednesday night aerial assaults struck Barmal district in the province, located approximately 175 kilometers southeast of the capital, Kabul.

The official identified the dead as members of the Taliban militant group, noting that they hailed from Pakistan's mountainous northwestern region of Waziristan, and had sneaked into Afghanistan's soil through the area.

The attack came only a day after U.S. forces carried out a drone strike in the Achin district of the troubled eastern province of Nangarhar, killing three members of the Daesh Takfiri militant group. U.S. drone strikes also killed 30 people in the same province last week.

The CIA spy agency regularly uses drones for airstrikes and spying missions in Afghanistan as well as Pakistan's northwestern tribal belt near the Afghan border. Washington has also been conducting targeted killings through remotely-controlled armed drones in Somalia and Yemen.

The United States says the airstrikes only target members of al-Qaeda and other militants, but according to local officials and witnesses, civilians have been the main victims of the attacks.

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