

Beat: Miscellaneous

Rocket attack on U.S. base near Kabul kills 4 American troops

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USPA News - Four American service members were killed Wednesday when suspected Taliban insurgents fired two rockets at a large U.S. military base near the Afghan capital, officials said, less than a day after the U.S. government announced plans to hold peace talks with the group. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the attack happened early Wednesday morning when its fighters fired several missiles at Bagram Air Base, which is a large U.S. military base that is located in Parwan province, just north of Kabul.

U.S. officials confirmed the base had been attacked. "Mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate (Taliban) yesterday night fired missiles into the Bagram airbase, the largest base in the country," Mujahid said. "Two of the missiles stormed into the residential part of the base, leaving as many as 11 American terrorist troops dead and 7 others wounded. The strikes also caused severe damages." The insurgent group is known to exaggerate casualty numbers. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) confirmed four of its service members were killed in the attack, and a military official in Washington, D.C. said all four casualties were American service members. The attack came less than a day after the Taliban opened a political office in the Qatari capital Doha with the aim of achieving peace and ending the war in Afghanistan. A senior U.S. official said the U.S. is expected to hold its first formal meeting with the Taliban `within days`, followed by a meeting between the Taliban and Afghanistan's High Peace Council. Wednesday's deaths raise the number of coalition troops killed in Afghanistan so far this year to 91, according to official figures. A total of 402 ISAF troops were killed in Afghanistan in 2012, down from 566 fatalities in 2011 and 711 in 2010. A majority of the fallen troops were American and were killed in the country's south, which is plagued by IED attacks on troops and civilians. There are currently more than 100,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, including some 68,000 U.S. troops and 9,000 British soldiers. Approximately 3,800 British soldiers are expected to withdraw from Afghanistan by the end of 2013, with all foreign combat troops due to leave by the end of 2014.

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