

Beat: News

Police officers kill 4 American, British soldiers in Afghanistan

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USPA News - Suspected Afghan police officers opened fire at foreign troops in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday and Thursday, killing two British and two American service members in two separate incidents, officials said on Thursday. They are the latest in a series of so-called green-on-blue attacks.

The first incident happened on Wednesday during a British foot patrol in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand Province, which is located in southern Afghanistan, when an exchange of gunfire erupted which resulted in the deaths of a British Royal Marine from 40 Commando Royal Marines, a British female soldier from 3 Medical Regiment and an Afghan man. "[The] Afghan man is believed to be a member of the Afghan Uniformed Police but who was not wearing uniform at the time," a spokesperson for Britain's Ministry of Defense said on Thursday. "The UK patrol were not working with any Afghan partners at the time. At this stage we do not know what initiated the exchange of gunfire and an investigation is ongoing." Major Laurence Roche, a spokesman for Task Force Helmand, said next-of-kin have been informed about the incident. "This is dreadful news for all of us serving in Afghanistan," he said. "Our sincere condolences go to their families, friends and colleagues at this time of grief." Hours later, on early Thursday, two American service members were killed in the Khas Urozgan District of Uruzgan province, also located in Afghanistan's volatile south, when they were fired upon by an individual wearing an Afghan National Police (ANP) uniform. "The incident is currently under investigation," U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) said in a statement, giving no other details. If both are confirmed as insider attacks, the shootings would add to an increasingly frequent series of attacks by Afghan security forces against foreign troops. At least 45 foreign and Afghan security forces have been killed by members of the Afghan security forces in 34 incidents this year alone. Such incidents were virtually unheard of just a few years ago. There are currently more than 112,500 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, including some 74,400 U.S. troops and 9,500 British soldiers. U.S. President Barack Obama previously ordered a drawdown of 23,000 U.S. troops by the end of this summer, and 15,000 of them have already left in recent weeks. Foreign combat troops are due to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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