

Eight soldiers martyred as security forces thwart terrorist attack on Bannu Cantonment

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In a brazen attack during the early hours of Monday, ten terrorists targeted the Bannu Cantonment in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, resulting in the martyrdom of eight soldiers, the military said in a statement. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the attackers attempted to infiltrate the cantonment but were repelled, leading them to detonate an explosive-laden vehicle against the perimeter wall. The statement said that the suicide blast led to the collapse of a portion of the wall and damaged the adjoining infrastructure, resulting in the martyrdom of eight soldiers. The statement said that the suicide blast caused a portion of the wall to collapse and damaged nearby infrastructure. The fallen heroes included Naib Subedar Muhammad Shehzad, Havildar Zil-e-Hussain, Havildar Shahzad Ahmed, Sepoy Ashfaq Hussain Khan, Sepoy Sobhan Majeed, Sepoy Imtiaz Khan, Sepoy Arsalan Aslam of the Pakistan Army, and Lance Naik Sabz Ali of the

Frontier Constabulary. According to ISPR, Pakistani troops effectively engaged the terrorists as a result of which all ten terrorists were killed during the ensuing operation. “This timely and effective response by the security forces prevented a major catastrophe, saving precious innocent lives. The gallant and selfless action of the security forces is a testament of unrelenting resolve in fight against terrorism,” it added. The statement said that the heinous act of terrorism has been undertaken by the Hafiz Gul Bahadur group, which operates from Afghanistan and has used Afghan soil to orchestrate acts of terrorism inside Pakistan in the past as well. “Pakistan has consistently raised its concerns with the Interim Afghan Government, asking them to deny persistent use of Afghan soil by the terrorists and take effective action against such elements,” it added. ISPR also said that Pakistan armed forces will keep defending the motherland and its people against this menace of terrorism and will take all necessary measures as deemed appropriate against these threats emanating from Afghanistan. Pakistan has witnessed an increase in terrorist activities over the past year, particularly in regions like Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan following the cessation of a ceasefire between the government and the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in November 2022. Last week, Islamabad reiterated its stance against engaging in talks with the TTP and called for Kabul’s action against terrorists operating from Afghan territory. According to the Centre for Research and Security

Studies' annual security report, violence and casualties in Pakistan saw a notable decline in the second quarter of 2024. The report reveals a 12% reduction in overall violence, with 380 fatalities reported compared to 432 in the preceding quarter. Throughout the second quarter, the country recorded 380 fatalities and 220 injuries from 240 incidents involving terrorist attacks and counter-terror operations. Of these incidents, 236 resulted in fatalities among civilians and security personnel, highlighting the ongoing challenges faced in maintaining security nationwide.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were identified as the epicentres of violence, accounting for over 90% of fatalities and 84% of all attacks involving both terrorist incidents and security force responses.