

One local, six ANP killed during Coalition forces operation in Zabul
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KABUL, Afghanistan – During operations directed against a known insurgent commander in Zabul Province early this morning, one local national and six Afghan National Police were killed and 13 were wounded.

The operation in Qalat District, approximately 120 km northeast of Kandahar, targeted a Taliban commander known to coordinate and direct attacks against Coalition forces along Highway One. He is also believed to facilitate the movement of illegal weapons into the Zabul Province.

An armed militant barricaded himself inside a building and engaged Coalition forces. He was killed, and one other was detained. Subsequently, Coalition forces received small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fire from a compound nearby. Multiple attempts to deter the engagement were unsuccessful. Coalition forces, concerned about the safety of women and children in the building they were searching, engaged those firing with small arms fire and coalition aircraft. It was later determined those firing on the force were ANP.

"Coalition forces deeply regret the incident of mistaken fire," said Col. Jerry O'Hara, U.S. Forces Afghanistan spokesman. "Initial reports indicate this was a tragic case of mistaken identity on both parts."

A joint delegation from Minister of Defense, Minister of Interior and Coalition Forces are headed to the scene to conduct an investigation.

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