

Beat: Miscellaneous

Yemen: U.S. drone kills 3 as al-Qaeda executes 14 off-duty soldiers

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USPA News - Three suspected al-Qaeda militants have been killed in a U.S. drone strike in central Yemen, security officials said Saturday, as Yemen's defense minister vowed an "Earth-shattering response" to the killings of 14 off-duty soldiers a day earlier. The unmanned U.S. drone fired several missiles at a residential building in the Obeida Valley in central Ma'rib governorate, which is just east of the capital Sana'a.

Yemeni security officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said three militants belonging to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) were killed. "The American drone targeted a house in Ma'rib governorate and three militants were killed. Several people were also wounded," the official said. Saturday's news of the first drone strike in Yemen in nearly two months came as Yemen's Defense Ministry confirmed 14 of its off-duty soldiers were killed in eastern Hadramout governorate on Friday evening. Defense Minister Mohammed Nasser Ahmed expressed his outrage over the attack and promised an "Earth-shattering response," saying the killings were "the final nail in [Al-Qaeda's] coffin." The defense ministry said the 14 soldiers were on board a civilian bus, going from Sayoun to Sana'a, when AQAP militants stopped them in the town of Shibam in Hadhramaut governorate. The militants then checked the IDs of all passengers before forcing the soldiers to come with them, after which they were executed by having their throats slit. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) confirmed it had killed the soldiers, who were traveling in civilian clothes and returning to their families after fighting militants. The group also posted several photos of the soldiers and their identification papers. Mohammed Albasha, a spokesman for the Yemeni Embassy in Washington, D.C., said authorities were investigating the massacre and questioned who had alerted the militants to the presence of unarmed soldiers on board the bus. "AQAP's atrocities united a politically divided Yemen. Today, we note a massive public outcry over last night's massacre," he said.

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