At least 11 servicemen and pro-Moscow Chechen police officers were killed in rebel attacks and landmine explosions in Chechnya in the previous 24 hours, an official in the region’s Kremlin-backed administration said Monday.

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Four of the soldiers were killed and five others wounded in rebel attacks on federal outposts across Chechnya, the official said on condition of anonymity. Three of the servicemen died in separate skirmishes with rebels in Chechnya’s southern mountains, and two were killed when their fuel-laden truck hit a land mine and exploded in a giant fireball outside the village of Samashki on Sunday, the official said. The bodies of two Chechen policemen with gunshot wounds were found on a street in Grozny on Monday morning, the official said. In customary retaliation for rebel raids, federal artillery shelled suspected rebel hideouts in several parts of Chechnya, he said. Federal forces also detained some 170 residents of Chechen towns and villages since Sunday in sweep operations. In Moscow, prosecutors announced the completion of an investigation into five Chechen men accused of staging an October 2002 car bombing outside a McDonald’s restaurant in Moscow that killed one man and injured eight people.

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