Six Russian Soldiers, Police Killed (Chechnya)

Moscow - Six Russian soldiers and local police and security officers were killed in rebel attacks in Chechnya over the past day, an official in the Kremlin-backed administration said Sunday.

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Three soldiers were killed by the rebels who fired on Russian military outposts 19 times during the last 24 hours, said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity. Another 10 servicemen have been wounded in the shelling.

Another servicemen died Saturday when his vehicle hit a rebel land mine near the southern village of Nozhai-Yurt, the official said.

The body of a Chechen police officer, shot in the head, was found Sunday in the Chechen capital, Grozny. His weapon and documents were missing.

A member of the security service for Chechnya's Moscow-backed leader, Akhmad Kadyrov, was killed Saturday in a clash with rebels near the southern village of Avcury and his four colleagues were wounded. One rebel was wounded and taken prisoner in the clash, the official said.

Russian forces barraged suspected rebel positions throughout the mountainous southern Chechnya with artillery and helicopter gunships, and troops detained at least 120 people in the last 24 hours on suspicion of aiding rebels, the Chechen official said.

Russian forces have waged two wars against Chechen rebels in the past decade, withdrawing in 1996 after a devastating 20-month conflict that left the region with de facto independence and returning in 1999.

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