

## International

### Turkish Jets Strike Rebels in Northern Iraq

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ANKARA, Turkey -- Turkish warplanes attacked Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq Thursday, the military said, hours after a land mine blast on the Turkish side of the border killed six soldiers.

A military statement said the jets targeted a "crowded group" of rebels in the Iraqi border region of Avasin-Basyan before safely returning to bases in Turkey.

There was no information on any casualties.

Turkish warplanes have often targeted rebel hideouts in northern Iraq from where guerrillas have staged hit-and-run attacks on Turkish targets for decades.

Thursday's attack came after six soldiers died when a military vehicle struck a land mine in Hakkari province, which borders Iraq. Authorities said the land mine, which wounded eight other soldiers, was planted by the rebels of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK.

The group has been fighting for self-rule in Turkey's southeast since 1984. The conflict has killed tens of thousands of people.

On Thursday, a Kurdish political party that is accused of links to the rebels, called on both the military and the rebels to end the violence.

"Those who want a democratic solution and a solution free of violence must take their hands off the trigger," Ahmet Turk, leader of the Democratic Society Party, said.

"As long as the deaths continue, none of our problems can be solved."

In a separate attack in Hakkari, a group of rebels abducted two people conducting road repairs and set equipment on fire, the state-run Anatolia news agency reported. Authorities were searching for the two workers, it said.

Meanwhile, police on Thursday searched premises of a civil servants and teachers' union and detained around 30 people in a crackdown on people suspected of links to the rebels, Anatolia reported. Those detained in the operation in five Turkish cities included several teachers, the report said.

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