

Taliban capture first Afghan district in 2018

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The fighting took place on Sunday night when dozens of Taliban fighters attacked the administrative compound of the Anar Dara district from many directions, said Nasir Mehri.

Taliban- File photo

Kabul: Taliban fighters have taken control of a district in Afghanistan's Farah province, making it the first district to fall into their hands in 2018, after clashes in which 10 members of the security forces were killed, officials said on Monday.

The fighting took place on Sunday night when dozens of Taliban fighters attacked the administrative compound of the Anar Dara district from many directions, said Nasir Mehri, the spokesperson of the Governor of the province.

"After a few hours of fighting the district headquarters fell to Taliban," Mehri told Efe news, adding that the security forces abandoned the compound after suffering multiple casualties.

Although Mehri did not report the number of casualties, an official of the local administration said on the condition of anonymity that over 10 members of the security forces had died.

According to an October report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction of the US Congress, 13 of the total 407 districts in Afghanistan were under Taliban control, while the rebels had a widespread presence in another 41 districts.

The Governor's spokesperson said that fighting was going on in some parts of the Anar Dara district and more reinforcements were on the way.

"The Afghan Air Force is also supporting the ground troops, we hope to push Taliban back from the district soon," Mehri said.

Taliban spokesperson Qari Yusuf Ahmadi confirmed in a statement that the militant group had captured the district headquarters and seized military equipment, adding that "15 enemy personnel were killed and several others injured in the battle".

Farah province has witnessed heavy fighting between the security forces and the Taliban in recent months.

On Saturday, at least 15 security personnel and around 30 Taliban fighters were killed in clashes in the Bala Buluk district of the province.

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