

Beat: Local

8 killed in failed attack on police station in China;s Xinjiang

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USPA News - Eight alleged assailants were shot dead by police Monday when they attacked a police station in China's western region of Xinjiang, officials said, coming just weeks after two officers and fourteen assailants were killed during a police operation in the restive region. The incident happened at around 6:30 a.m. local time on Monday when a group of knife-wielding men attacked a police station in a village in Yarkand county, located near the city of Kashgar that is close to the border with Kyrgyzstan.

Few details about the attack were made available. "Nine thugs carrying machetes attacked a public security bureau in Yarkand county, throwing explosive devices and setting fire to a police vehicle," said a brief news report on a government-run regional news portal. It said eight of the attackers were shot dead by police while one alleged assailant was arrested. The state-run Xinhua news agency said the group was being led by two men and had repeatedly gathered to watch extremist videos since August. They also raised money and were making and testing explosives to use in terrorist attacks. A total of 25 explosives and nine knives were recovered at the scene of Monday's attack, in which no police officers were injured, Xinhua reported. The attack follows another incident in Xinjiang earlier this month, when police in Shufu county were attacked with machetes and an explosive device while attempting to arrest a suspect. In response to the attack, during which two police officers were killed, officers shot dead fourteen alleged assailants and arrested two others. Another outburst of violence took place in November when a group of axe-wielding assailants attacked a police station in Bachu county of Xinjiang, killing two police officers and injuring two others. Nine attackers were shot dead by police before order was restored, state-run media said at the time. An estimated eight million Uighurs are living in the Central Asian region of Xinjiang, which is officially known as China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. A large number of Uighur are reportedly unhappy about the large migrant Han Chinese settlers, accusing them of making their interests less important and generally disregarding their culture. Xinjiang was the scene of violent clashes between Uighur Muslims and Han Chinese in July 2009, leaving 197 people killed and more than 1,700 others injured. The riots were the region's worst ethnic clashes in decades and the violence only stopped when a large number of troops were deployed to the remote western region. Following the riots, China cut all communications from the region to the rest of the world, including international phone calls, text messaging, and the Internet. Thousands of additional security forces have since been deployed and thousands of 'riot-proof' closed-circuit television cameras have been set up in public places in an attempt to discourage any violence or unrest.

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