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6 soldiers, guerillas die in fresh Colombia clashes

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Three soldiers were killed, and three Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) rebels died in the clashes in northeast Colombia, in the oil-rich Arauca region near the border with Venezuela, according to a statement from the military,

A junior officer and two soldiers tasked with protecting the oil fields were killed in the violence, the latest in a series of clashes in recent weeks.

The three Farc guerillas who died were wearing army uniforms, the military said.

"According to our information, they were trying to prepare an attack against an oil complex," the statement said.

The area where the fighting took place is a traditional Farc-stronghold and the site recent clashes.

More than 40 Farc guerrillas have died in the past several days in three military operations.

The renewed fighting threatens fragile peace talks, which have been ongoing in Cuba since November 2012.

With the fate of the peace process on the line, its guarantor countries Cuba and Norway on Wednesday urged the rebels and Bogota to step up talks.

Colombia's decades-long civil war has killed some 200 000 people and uprooted more than six million since Farc launched its Marxist guerrilla war in 1964.

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