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## Insurgents planting IEDs inside human corpses in Kandahar, says ISAF

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KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Coalition forces in Afghanistan are being warned to look out for a gruesome and unusual tactic being used by insurgents.

The International Security Assistance Force said bombmakers in Kandahar province, where Canadian troops have been stationed for the past two years, have twice in recent days used human corpses to hide IEDs.

The first such IED was planted on the body of a decapitated Afghan man found in a cemetery Dec. 21, ISAF spokesman Brig.-Gen. Carlos Branco said Monday from Kabul.

NATO Wing Cmdr. Antony McCord added the man was wearing an Afghan National Army uniform but it's not clear if he was in fact a soldier.

Two Afghans were killed and two others were injured when the bomb exploded.

Nobody was hurt after a second "booby-trapped" body was discovered Sunday, 18 kilometres from where the first incident occurred.

"We cannot establish a pattern. This is not the beginning of something," Branco insisted.

"So far this is sporadic."

A common war tactic elsewhere, including Vietnam and Mozambique, Branco said it happened once before in Afghanistan in August 2006.

Insurgents use all kinds of things to hide IEDs including animals and other objects, Branco added.

While it's believed the insurgents killed the two men before using their bodies as bombs, Branco wouldn't speculate on why they might have done this.

"It is indeed a moral low... but the Taliban have shown that they are pretty capable of some horrible acts," McCord said, noting previous acts lead coalition forces to believe insurgents are in fact responsible even though there have yet to be any arrests.

"They've quite happily hanged 15-year-old youth for having U.S. dollars on their possession and recently they beheaded a grandmother and her grandchild for no crime other than visiting people in hospital.

"They are particularly horrible and this is just another sign of how despicable they can be."

The Taliban have been known to kill civilians as a means of intimidation but Branco couldn't say whether the target was civilian or military.

"The only thing I can tell you is we are going to take measures to spread the information to our troops and to be very cautious in similar situations," he said.

"We condemn in the strongest possible terms the absolute disgraceful use of human corpses to place IEDs."

"For insurgents to use such tactics goes far beyond the pale of human decency, desecrating human remains in such a way."

McCord, who is based in Kandahar, said the Afghan army and police will also be reviewing their tactics as a result of the latest development.

IEDs remain among the biggest headaches for Canadian troops as they try to boost security in southern Afghanistan.

They are responsible for the majority of Canada's 73 combat deaths and most recently sent three soldiers to hospital after their convoy struck a device in Kandahar's Arghandab district.

The majority of IED attacks against Canadian troops have occurred in the volatile Zhari and Panjwai districts of Kandahar.