

## Canadian soldier killed in Afghanistan

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KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Another Canadian Forces soldier was killed by a roadside bomb this morning, in what's already turning out to be an exceptionally bloody week of insurgent activity in Afghanistan.

Trooper Richard Renaud, 26, of Alma Que., a member of the 12e Régiment Blindé du Canada, Valcartier, Que., was killed in the blast.

The explosion occurred during a patrol at around 7:15 this morning local time.

It is the third known improvised explosive device (IED) attack against the Canadian military in the Kandahar area in the past three days. The previous two attacks did not result in fatalities.



Trooper Richard Renaud was killed Tuesday by a roadside bomb. (DND)

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Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche gives details in Kandahar

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The Canadian Forces are saying only that an armoured Coyote vehicle was hit about 10 kilometres north of the city today, without specifying details. Another soldier was injured by the blast, but released from hospital shortly afterward.

Trooper Renaud is the third soldier killed in 2008 and the 77th since the Canadian military sent troops to Afghanistan. Most of the dead have been killed by IEDS.

“Our thoughts and sincere condolences are with the family and friends of the brave soldier who was killed whilst on patrol today,” said Wing Commander Antony McCord, a NATO spokesman. “This soldier’s life was taken while trying to help bring peace and security to Afghanistan.”

The three recent IED attacks against the Canadian Forces have occurred over a wide area.

On Sunday, soldiers were working 35 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City, when their vehicle hit an IED. They were working to clear mines from near the village of Zangabad. All four were sent to hospital but were released.

On Monday, one soldier was injured by an IED in nearby Taloqan, but was soon released from hospital.

Today’s deadly attack occurred in the Arghandab, immediately north of the city of Kandahar. The area is an emerging source of concern for NATO. A local warlord who had been friendly to NATO forces and hostile to the Taliban died of a heart attack two months ago.

The Canadian Forces is investing heavily in armoured vehicles and in mine-detecting equipment.

While releasing no statistics, the military says it is getting better at spotting threats and thwarting attacks before they happen, and taking fewer casualties when the bombs do go off.

Brigadier-General Guy Laroche, the top Canadian soldier in Afghanistan, said in a recent interview that he plans to divert force-protection funds to pave up to 10 kilometres of highways around Kandahar.

The move is intended to give local residents jobs while making it tougher for insurgents to plant bombs under roadways.

In addition to continued bombings of military targets, insurgents have also been focusing on “soft” targets against policemen and foreigners.

Ten policemen were killed last weekend as Taliban stormed a checkpoint before dawn in the Maywand province, north of Kandahar.

The Taliban has also stepped up operations in Kabul, killing eight yesterday at a luxury hotel frequented by Westerners.

The Associated Press reported today that the Taliban has announced it will target restaurants in the capital city.

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