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## NATO: Bomb kills service member in Afghanistan

**NATO says bomb kills service member in northern Afghanistan, bringing monthly toll to 56**

KATHARINE HOURELD

Oct 27, 2010

A bomb killed a NATO service member in northern Afghanistan on Wednesday, bringing the monthly death toll of NATO troops to 56, the coalition said.

The north, traditionally considered one of Afghanistan's safer region, has seen an upsurge in attacks and bombings in recent months. A Dutch aid worker and his Afghan driver were kidnapped in northern Afghanistan on Monday and their whereabouts are still unknown.

Coalition and Afghan forces have been pushing into Taliban strongholds in the south but insurgent attacks in other parts of the country have shot up.

So far, 596 members of the international coalition have been killed in Afghanistan this year. NATO did not give further details on the death or provide the nationality of the service member.

NATO also said its forces captured on Tuesday a man who is a facilitator for the Haqqani network responsible for moving bomb components into the capital Kabul. The Haqqanis are a mainly Pakistan-based Taliban faction closely tied to al-Qaida.

The arrest follows Monday's capture of a Taliban leader in Kandahar accused of constructing suicide vests and planning and directing bomb attacks.

Afghan and coalition forces say they have killed or captured many insurgent leaders in recent months but it is unclear whether the operations are having a major effect on quelling the insurgency.

In other developments, intense negotiations continued between Afghan President Hamid Karzai and the international community over the Afghan government's Dec. 17 deadline for ridding the nation of private security guards.

The U.N.'s top representative in Afghanistan said in a Wednesday statement that the international community is supporting the "principled stand" the Afghan government has taken on private security companies. Negotiations are still under way about how fast it can be implemented.

Staffan De Mistura said the international community is committed to carrying out the decree with a "fixed timetable" and accepts that it "must respond promptly to President Karzai's long-standing concerns about the conduct of private security companies."

Karzai has said that the companies commit human rights abuses, pay protection money to the insurgency and undercut the national armed forces by offering higher wages.

The ban has threatened to shut down millions of dollars of development projects.

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