



RAPID
Realtime Analysis and Publishing of IED Data

Weekly News Update

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The RAPID Weekly News Update is a weekly collection of unclassified news bulletins focused on noteworthy improvised explosive attacks and trends in the IED/C-IED community. For additional information or to be added to the RAPID network, please email the RAPID team (rapid@atsolutions.com) from your government email account.



Wreckage from a VBIED attack in Kut, Iraq this week (ABC/AFP)

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1. **New Stryker Vehicle More Resistant Against IEDs** (USA Today)

Monday, 15 August 2011

http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/afghanistan/2011-08-14-stryker-IED-protect-troops_n.htm?csp=34news

Newly designed Stryker combat vehicles used by Army brigades in Afghanistan resist bomb blasts that had routinely shredded other vehicles and the soldiers in them, according to military and civilian officials and documents.

Strykers with new V-shaped hulls were rushed to Afghanistan after two years in which the 5th Stryker Combat Brigade lost 37 soldiers and saw 239 wounded. In one attack in October 2009, a roadside bomb obliterated a flat-bottomed Stryker, killing seven soldiers.

The new Strykers began arriving in the spring, and on July 8, one was struck by an insurgent bomb. All of the soldiers survived and returned to duty, according to civilian and military officials who spoke about the incident on condition of anonymity because some details of the attack are classified.

Since then, there have been additional attacks, and the new Strykers have provided far better protection than the old models, the officials said.

"This is a case study in how to deal with a rapidly changing insurgency," said Loren Thompson, a military analyst at the Lexington Institute defense industry consultant. "You can't go through normal process. You must quickly turn around relatively low-cost solutions if you want to win the war."

Strykers are eight-wheeled armored vehicles that provide transport and firepower for brigades of 3,500 infantry troops. In size and power they are between a tank and a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, which is used primarily for transport. Six active-duty brigades use Strykers as does one reserve unit. Two more brigades are planned for 2013.

Until this year, Strykers have had flat bottoms, which absorb the force of an explosion. The V-shaped hulls of MRAPs, which deflect the force of blasts, have been credited by the Pentagon with saving thousands of lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. The new Stryker, which has lower ground clearance than an MRAP, is outfitted with two, shallower V-shaped hulls.

The Army wants 150 of the new Strykers, which cost \$2.3 million each, in service by the end of summer. It has orders for 450 of them. There are thousands of MRAPs in Afghanistan.

The influx of new vehicles comes as insurgents have increasingly turned to improvised explosive devices as the No.1 weapon against U.S. troops.

From April through June, U.S. troops encountered 3,845 bombs, a 14% increase over the same period in 2010. Casualties from attacks on vehicles dropped 10% compared with the same period in 2010, according to the Pentagon's Joint IED Defeat Organization.

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Troops on foot patrols are seeing an increase in casualties from IEDs as more service members were deployed into villages and rural areas to root out Taliban insurgents. IED attacks on so-called dismounted troops jumped nearly 60% this past spring compared with spring 2010, according to Pentagon data.

The Pentagon has responded to urgent requests from commanders for equipment to protect troops on foot patrol by sending hand-held mine detectors, bomb-sniffing dogs and underwear that prevents debris from puncturing the abdomens of troops who step on bombs.

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2. **Army Seeks Safe Soldier Solutions** (Military.com)

Tuesday, 16 August 2011

<http://www.military.com/news/article/army-news/army-seeks-safe-soldier-solutions.html>

Imagine a checkpoint where Soldiers don't have to walk up to a vehicle that's been rigged to explode, but instead, they can detect the explosives at safe, standoff distances. That's the kind of technology the Army Research Laboratory, or ARL, is investing in as part of a research effort now shared with the Leonard Wood Institute in Missouri.

That technology is laser spectroscopy, which can be used for standoff explosive detection, is based on ARL's advanced research in laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy. It is 1980s technology that today can detect explosive threats in real time, sometimes processing agent analysis in as little as one-second. The Leonard Wood Institute work involved advancing current technology to detect such threats, including home-made explosives, beyond 20 meters.

The Leonard Wood Institute, or LWI, is a non-profit organization located at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., that was created to connect regional businesses and university expertise to Army training and technology needs. Its formal Cooperative Agreement with ARL's Human Research and Engineering Directorate allows LWI to initiate, fund, manage and participate in applied research, and build capacity to support Army innovation.

The laser spectroscopy testing launched at Fort Leonard Wood looks to be a promising way to keep Soldiers out of harm's way, experts say. The newest system based on that technology, the Checkpoint Explosives Detection System, uses a multi-modal approach to detect harmful materials. The system combines ARL's laser induced breakdown spectroscopy, the ultraviolet Raman spectroscopy and Townsend effect plasma spectroscopy.

This combination could be vital in the counter-improvised explosive device, or IED, effort and thereby, saving lives in current and future counter-IED operations, said Alan Davison, chief of the Maneuver and Mobility Branch with ARL's Human Research and Engineering Directorate at the Fort Leonard Wood Institute.

U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan and Iraq currently have no effective means to detect trace elements of explosives from a distance that make up the enemies' strategic weapon of choice, IEDs, which are the primary cause of death and injury to American Soldiers.

Improving upon systems like this, while also using robots, keeps Soldiers out of harm's way.

"One of the biggest challenges that Soldiers have when operating robots is that the two-dimension computer displays they use provide very limited depth perception," Davison said. "Two-dimension displays do not provide the kind of depth perception needed to perform many military tasks."

For example, if a Soldier is searching through a pile of roadside garbage for an IED using a robot, it is much more difficult to manipulate objects using the robotic arm through a 2-D computer screen because the Soldier cannot perceive how deep that robot should truly dig in the garbage.

Three-dimensional visualization, however, greatly improves the Soldier's ability to mentally place an object in the spatial world. ARL researchers believe that by combining the benefits of 3-D or stereo vision with tactile feedback enhanced manipulation, Soldiers will be much better enabled to locate and manipulate objects associated with IEDs. This improved capability should also lead to less time in hazardous zones while working with IEDs or their components.

"Up until recently, the robotic work has focused on improving the stereo-vision. That clearly has helped the Soldier see what he is trying to accomplish by manipulating the arm. But as the stereo-vision continued to improve, it became more obvious that the robotic work was still not nearly as good as human performance," said Davison.

"For example, reaching out to grab a bottle was difficult and not so much because the visual was not good but that the manipulator arm was hard to control."

He said an ARL experiment, planned for September 2011, will combine a tactile feedback (haptic) manipulator arm that operates much more like the human hand with some force feedback through the manipulator to the controller in the Soldier's hand, with a 3-D stereo vision system.

"While robotics are probably a long way from approaching human performance in many tasks, if we can close this gap, we can improve what a Soldier can do with a robot and reduce the time in the most dangerous conditions."

Soldiers in combat today often get up close and personal to dangerous objects, and use hand-held devices with sensors to detect all metallic and nonmetallic antitank and antipersonnel mines. That technology, the AN/PSS-14, combines ground penetrating radar and highly sensitive metal detector technology using advanced data fusion algorithms.

This combination allows the system to detect anti-personnel and anti-tank mines but operators of this eight-pound handheld device need refresher training about every 60 days or less on well-prepared training terrains. Researchers from ARL, LWI, industry and academia have developed a device that can effectively bring refresher training to operators in a small, indoor environment, which is a quick-fix to locations where the more traditional training sites are not always available, and are expensive to set up.

The team developed two landmine detection training simulators -- including all hardware and software -- that are similar to the AN/PSS-14 landmine detector. The system uses two cameras, which wirelessly transmit information to a laptop via Bluetooth technology.

The training device, they say, offers an efficient, low-cost way to provide realistic landmine detection training for Soldiers, allowing the trainer to give valuable, real-time feedback to equipment operators. Training with this new device can be conducted inside, in only a small area. While it is not designed or expected to

completely replace the traditional training on outdoor lanes, it can provide an opportunity for badly needed refresher training.

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3. ANP Seize Mortar Mines, Artillery Shells (Afghan Ministry of Interior)

Monday, 15 August 2011

<http://moi.gov.af/en/news/2832>

Afghan National Police, Afghan National Army, NDS and Coalition Forces launched 13 joint and independent operations over the past 24 hours in surrounding areas of the Faryab, Balkh, Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Khost, Paktika and Paktia provinces.

As a result of these operations, 20 armed insurgents were killed, one other armed insurgent was wounded and 17 armed insurgents were arrested.

Also, Afghan National Police seized amount of light and heavy weapons from insurgents during of these operations in mentioned provinces.

Yesterday, Afghan National Police has arrested two armed robbers and three criminals in surrounding areas of the Kabul province.

In the meantime, Afghan National Police discovered and seized 199 rounds of mortar mines, eight rounds of artillery shells, four BM-1 bullets, 15 AK-47 rifles, two rounds of anti-vehicle mines, five hand grenades, one PKM machine gun, one rocket launcher and one pistol over the past 24 hours as a result of operations in surrounding areas of the Kabul, Parwan, Bamyán, Baghlan, Faryab, Badakhshan, Helmand and Paktika provinces.

The discovery and defusing of IEDs show that the Afghan National Police now are more professional and experienced, and are able to protect civilian and this is a good step forward in improving the security and stability in the country.

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4. **ANP Seize Mines, Explosives** (Afghan Ministry of Interior)

Saturday, 13 August 2011

<http://moi.gov.af/en/news/2762>

Afghan National Police, Afghan National Army, NDS and Coalition Forces launched 10 joint operations over the past 24 hours in surrounding areas of the Kabul, Nangarhar, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Paktika, Baghlan, Paktia and Farah provinces.

As a result of these operations, 18 armed insurgents were killed, seven other armed insurgents were wounded and 31 armed insurgents were arrested.

Also, Afghan National Police seized amount of light and heavy weapons from insurgents during of operations in mentioned provinces.

Afghan National Border Police has arrested three passengers with fake passports in Kabul international airport.

Afghan National Police arrested a group of four members who were involved in armed robbery and kidnapping in Klola Pashta area, Kabul city.

In the meantime, Afghan National Police discovered and seized 13 rounds of anti-vehicle mines, 1 round of anti-personnel mine, one drum 20kg full of explosives, seven AK-47 rifles, six pistols, two rocket launchers, five motorbikes, one vehicle and five artillery shells over the past 24 hours as a result of operations in surrounding areas of the Kabul, Kapisa, Baghlan, Farah, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunduz, Nimroz and Uruzgan provinces.

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5. ISAF Seizes 1,000 kg Ammonium Nitrate (ISAF)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/isaf-joint-command-evening-operational-update-august-14-2011.html>

A combined Afghan and International Security Assistance Force patrol detained two suspected insurgents during an operation targeting an insurgent network in Washer district, Helmand province, yesterday. The insurgent group is directly responsible for supplying lethal aid used against ANSF and coalition forces in Helmand.

The operation secured 2,315 pounds (1,050 kilograms) of ammonium nitrate, which was safely destroyed on site. The detainees were taken in by Afghan Security Forces for further questioning.

In other International Security Assistance Force news throughout Afghanistan:

A combined Afghan and coalition patrol detained two suspected insurgents during an operation targeting a Taliban leader in Musa Qal'Ah district, Helmand province, yesterday. The target of the operation is responsible for numerous attacks against ANSF and coalition forces and is also responsible for supplying lethal aid to anti-Afghan fighters.

The operation secured a quantity of AK-47's and a quantity of ammunition. The weapons and ammunition were safely destroyed on site. The detainees were taken in by Afghan Security Forces for further questioning.

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6. **ANP Arrest Mine Planters, Seize Explosives, Mines** (Afghan Ministry of Interior)

Wednesday, 10 August 2011

<http://moi.gov.af/en/news/2730>

Afghan National Police, Afghan National Army and Coalition Forces launched 24 joint and independent operations over the past 24 hours in surrounding areas of the Kabul, Kapisa, Takhar, Faryab, Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan, Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Paktia, Nimroz, Laghman and Khost provinces.

As a result of these operations, 25 armed insurgents were killed, eight other armed insurgents were wounded and 53 armed insurgents were arrested.

Also, Afghan National Police seized amount of light and heavy weapons from insurgents during operations in mentioned provinces.

Kunar:

Yesterday, Afghan National Police arrested two mine planters while planting an anti-vehicle mines under a culvert in Hakim Abad region, Khas Kunar district of eastern Kunar province.

Kabul:

Afghan National Police has arrested two murderers and two land extorters in Kabul province.

In the meantime, Afghan National Police discovered and seized 13 AK-47 machine gun, 8 rounds of anti-personal mines, 9 drums 20kg full of explosives, three PKM machine guns, seven hand grenades, nine rounds anti-vehicle mines, two motorbikes, six pistols, one rocker launcher and 120 PKM bullets over the past 24 hours as a result of operations in surrounding areas of the Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunduz, Ghor, Herat, Zabul, Kabul, Khost, Takhar, Faryab and Kandahar provinces.

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7. French Soldier And Two NATO Troops Die In Afghanistan (AGI News)

Friday, 12 August 2011

<http://www.agi.it/english-version/world/elenco-notizie/201108120757-pol-ren1004-french-soldier-and-2-nato-troops-die-in-afghanistan>

An improvised explosive device (IED) hit an armored vehicle killing a French soldier and injuring three other soldiers in the Eastern Afghan province of Karpisa. The roadside bomb exploded in the same area where other two French soldiers were killed last Sunday. Two more coalition service members died as a result of two separate insurgent attacks in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan. . .

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8. Suicide Bombers, Gunmen, Kill 22 In Central Afghanistan (Reuters)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/14/us-afghanistan-attack-idUSTRE77D0MY20110814>

Taliban suicide bombers killed at least 22 people in a bold attack on a governor's compound in central Afghanistan during a security meeting Sunday, officials said, with gunbattles and several blasts heard before the assault was put down.

A Reuters witness and others nearby reported hearing at least five explosions as Afghan security forces inside the compound of Parwan governor Abdul Basir Salangi fought back.

Afghanistan's Interior Ministry said 22 people were killed and 34 wounded. The dead included 16 government employees and six police, it said in a statement.

Parwan lies about an hour's drive northwest of the capital, Kabul, another worrying sign of the reach of the Taliban and other insurgents.

Eight days ago, a rocket-propelled grenade fired by the Taliban brought down a NATO helicopter in another central Afghan province near Kabul, killing 30 U.S. troops and eight Afghans in the worst single incident for foreign forces in 10 years of war.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the Parwan attack. Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Islamist group, said the assault began when a suicide car bomber detonated his explosives at the gate of the compound.

He said five other bombers made it inside the compound, where he claimed U.S. officials were taking part in a meeting.

"Many people were killed, including Americans, but we still don't have the exact information," Mujahid said by telephone from an undisclosed location.

The Taliban often exaggerate incidents involving Afghan government targets or foreign troops.

The twisted wreckage of what appeared to have been the car bomb lay outside the gate of the compound as Afghan police and soldiers swarmed around the scene.

Sharafuddin Rahimi, an adviser to the Parwan police chief, said a meeting involving the police chief, the governor "and some foreign advisers" was under way when the attack was launched but said the attackers did not reach the meeting room.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul confirmed several of its members were attending a shura, or meeting, in Salangi's office at the time of the attack but said none was injured.

Rahimi said one of the police chief's bodyguards was among those killed, as well as women and children.

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Reuters Television pictures showed the bodies of some of those killed lying huddled behind what was left of their desks amid the debris of destroyed outer offices in the compound.

A concrete water tank inside the compound was filled with blood. Reuters pictures showed an unidentified Afghan policeman stomping on the head of one of the dead attackers.

In a statement from the presidential palace, Afghan President Hamid Karzai strongly condemned the Parwan attack. ISAF, which provided air cover during the fight, also condemned the raid as "despicable."

Reuters Television showed Salangi talking on the phone as officials rushed anxiously around his office. In the middle of the raid, he told Afghan TV his forces were fighting back.

Insurgents, often from the Taliban, have launched a series of attacks against government targets over the past year, often in the east of the country near the porous border with Pakistan's largely lawless tribal lands.

Violence across Afghanistan in 2010 reached its worst levels since the Taliban were toppled by U.S.-backed Afghan forces in late 2001, and 2011 has followed a similar trend.

While foreign military casualties hit record levels last year -- and 2011 has been almost as bloody -- civilians continue to bear the brunt of the costly and increasingly unpopular war.

U.N. figures released last month showed that the first six months of 2011 had been the deadliest of the war for ordinary Afghans, with 1,462 killed, a rise of 15 percent on the same period last year. The same U.N. report blamed 80 percent of those civilian casualties on insurgents.

U.S. and other NATO commanders have claimed success in halting the momentum of a growing insurgency in the Taliban heartland in the south over the past year, although insurgents have hit back with strikes against targets in once relatively peaceful parts of the country.

A recent spike in violence also followed the beginning of a gradual process to hand security responsibility back to Afghans last month.

That process will end with the final foreign combat troops leaving Afghanistan by the end of 2014, although some U.S. lawmakers have questioned whether that timetable is not quick enough.

(Additional reporting by Mirwais Haroon, Abdul Saboor and Hamid Shalizi in KABUL; Writing by Paul Tait; Editing by Sanjeev Miglani and Alex Richardson)

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9. **Marines Destroy Afghani IED Factory** (NBC)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

<http://www.9news.com/news/world/213013/347/Marines-destroy-Afghani-IED-factory>

U.S. Marines have destroyed a bazaar in Afghanistan they say was being used by insurgents to manufacture improvised explosive devices.

Marines from the Second Combat Engineer Battalion of the Second Marine Division used line charges to destroy the buildings in Helmand Province.

IED's are among the biggest challenges facing international forces in Afghanistan.

Just Thursday, five Americans were killed by a roadside bomb in the country's south.

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10. **British Soldier Killed After Explosion In Afghanistan** (Daily Record)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/2011/08/14/british-soldier-killed-after-explosion-in-afghanistan-86908-23344483/>

A British soldier has been killed by an explosion in southern Afghanistan, the Ministry of Defence said today.

The soldier, from 1st Battalion The Rifles, was killed by an improvised explosive device (IED) while on foot patrol on Friday in the Shaparak area of the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand Province.

His family has been informed.

Spokesman for Task Force Helmand Major Rolf Kurth said: "It is my sad duty to inform you of the death of a soldier from 1st Battalion The Rifles in the Shaparak area of the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province today.

"The soldier was part of a foot patrol promoting a local community engagement project when he was killed in an explosion.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends at this difficult time."

The number of British service personnel who have died since operations began in Afghanistan in 2001 now totals 379.

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11. DOD Identifies Five U.S. Troops Killed In IED Blast In Afghanistan (Stars and Stripes)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://www.stripes.com/news/dod-identifies-five-u-s-troops-killed-in-ied-blast-in-afghanistan-1.152181>

A quiet solemnity has settled in here, and a profound sadness hangs like a fog. The gym that usually blasts with music and clangs with the sound of weights is silent. A painful emptiness pervades the post.

For those in Company C, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Thursday was the worst of days. Five of its soldiers, all from 3rd Platoon's 1st Squad, were killed when their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicle rolled over an improvised explosive device on a desolate road in southern Kandahar province.

"It's like your family just got ripped out of your heart," Pfc. Thadius Deloatch said.

On Sunday, the Department of Defense identified those killed in the explosion: Sgt. Edward J. Frank II, 26, of Yonkers, N.Y.; Spc. Jameel T. Freeman, 26, of Baltimore, Md.; Spc. Patrick L. Lay II, 21, of Fletcher, N.C.; Spc. Jordan M. Morris, 23, of Stillwater, Okla.; Pfc. Rueben J. Lopez, 27, of Williams, Calif.

After the explosion Thursday, the battalion chaplain couldn't get here soon enough. A line of soldiers needing him waited late into the night, and early the next morning. For many, the tears pushed out in waves. For others, solace came in the form of a quiet stoicism.

"I don't know what to do right now. My whole squad is gone," Pfc. Jeremy Urzua said. His squad leader, Frank, was among the soldiers killed in the blast and had given him a rare day off Thursday.

"I didn't see it at first, but he just saved my life," said Urzua, who was back at COP when the attack occurred that morning.

According to Company C Commander Capt. Dennis Call, the IED was triggered by a detonator and was buried in a powdery layer of soil soldiers call "moon dust." From fighting positions nearby, soldiers watched as the catastrophic explosion sent a plume of white smoke nearly 200 feet in the air. When they arrived at the blast site moments later, they found the doors and turret blown from the vehicle.

The extreme nature of the blast, which breached the hull of the armored vehicle and pushed the engine into the cab, remains under investigation, but soldiers here speculate that military-grade explosives were used.

Members of the 1st Squad, who were posted at one of the fighting positions, were on a breakfast run when they drove over the IED planted in the road nicknamed "Montreal bypass." It was built recently by 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment in an effort to cut off the enemy line of approach and to link Company C to Company A to the west.

"This was probably harder fought for than any of the other territory," said 1st Lt. Corey Walker about the Montreal bypass. The company, which is pushing south to the Arghandab River, is attacked nearly every day. They've suffered multiple IED blasts, and more than 20 soldiers have been injured.

“When you’ve sacrificed lives for a piece of ground, it becomes more than a piece of tactical terrain. The war for us is this 800 meter stretch of road,” Walker said.

Third Platoon knows about sacrifice. Since deploying, all seven of the soldiers the company has lost have come from 3rd Platoon. Along with the five deaths on Thursday, Spc. Preston Dennis was killed in April in an IED strike and Pfc. Corey Johnson was killed in May when his vehicle was ambushed in a recoilless rifle attack.

The soldiers of Company C have forged an alliance known only to the infantry soldier. They share the misery of extreme suffering, the filth and the physical and emotional scars earned together.

Since the attack, soldiers have been remembering the best of those who were killed Thursday.

“They’re what the infantry is all about. They were just willing to do anything for you, for each other,” Urzua said.

Frank, the squad leader, was a family man and the father figure whom so many looked up to. Lay was the athlete and the fast learner who could figure anything out. Morris was a college boy who could take it as well as he could give it, and though he deployed late, he fit right in. Freeman was the martial artist who could do a hilarious Bill Cosby impression. Lopez, the nicest soldier anybody ever met, was always the first to help out. His smile never left his face, soldiers said.

As soldiers look to get on with their mission, they know they have each other but worry about the families back at Fort Drum, N.Y., and wish they could be there for them. Some wonder if they’re becoming part of a forgotten war.

“People back home don’t even know we still got people dying out here,” 3rd Platoon’s Spc. Jordan McDaniel said.

The five soldiers from Company C were among seven NATO servicemembers killed in Afghanistan on Thursday, and their deaths follow the crash of a Chinook helicopter in Wardak province, where 30 U.S. servicemembers were killed.

But Company C is nothing if not resilient.

“It’s terrifying getting back in a vehicle after you’ve seen what can happen,” Eric Gregory, staff sergeant and 3rd Platoon senior squad leader, said. “Everyday we’re faced with a choice to take the hard right over the easy wrong. This platoon will not give up. They’re kicking.”

Insurgent attacks will not force them out, Gregory said.

“They want to crush our hopes. They want to demoralize us. It’s not working. Those are their tactics, but we’re still here, every day. Until we accomplish the mission, we’re not going anywhere.”

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12. **Afghanistan: Bombing Kills Eight** (New York Times)

Tuesday, 16 August 2011

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/17/world/asia/17briefs-Bombing.html>

A bomb planted on a motorcycle exploded Tuesday at a vegetable market in Oruzgan Province, in southern Afghanistan, killing at least eight people and wounding dozens more at dusk as residents broke their daily fast for the holy month of Ramadan, the authorities said. In neighboring Kandahar Province, a gunman killed Rabia Sadat, an employee of the province's Work and Social Affairs Department, as she was getting into a car outside her home to go to work, said her father, Sayed Hussein Sadat. Also Tuesday, NATO said a cargo plane was slightly damaged but no one aboard was hurt when it collided with a surveillance drone in eastern Afghanistan on Monday. The drone went down and had not yet been located, NATO said.

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13. **Two Diggers Injured In Afghanistan** (Australian Associated Press)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/two-diggers-injured-in-afghanistan-20110814-1isue.html>

Two Australian soldiers serving in Afghanistan have been injured by an improvised explosive device (IED). The soldiers, belonging to the Australian mentoring taskforce three, were wounded on Saturday afternoon, local time, when their Bushmaster protected mobility vehicle struck the IED.

The blast in the Oruzgan province left one of the soldiers with serious wounds and the other with minor injuries, the Defence Department said in a statement.

Acting chief of joint operations, Rear Admiral David Johnston, said the soldiers, wounded in the Mirabad Valley, were treated by their patrol mates at the scene before being quickly evacuated by helicopter for specialist care. "Both soldiers have received immediate trauma care in the role-two medical facility at multinational base Tarin Kot and both were later moved to Kandahar for further treatment," he said.

Rear Admiral Johnston said the seriously wounded soldier would move to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Centre in Germany for a specialist assessment. The explosion came a short time after another Bushmaster protected mobility vehicle struck a separate insurgent-laid IED in the same area.

This incident increases the number of soldiers wounded in action in Afghanistan this year to 19. Since Australia joined the US-led war in 2001, 184 diggers have been wounded in Afghanistan.

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14. Iraqi Cities Hit By Deadly Wave Of Violence (BBC)

Monday, 15 August 2011

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14525518>

A series of bomb attacks has hit several Iraqi cities, killing at least 60 people.

The worst attack took place in the south-eastern city of Kut where police said two near-simultaneous bombs killed at least 37 people.

The violence came as other attacks were reported in the country, including in Diyala province where 10 people died.

Two weeks ago, Iraqi leaders said there would be talks with the US over whether to keep some US forces in Iraq in 2012.

All US forces are due to leave the country by the end of the year, but Iraqi and US officials have expressed concern about the ability of Iraqi forces to protect the country.

The blasts appeared to be co-ordinated to go off in the morning and included a combination of parked car bombs, roadside bombs and suicide bombers.

However, there was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks.

The latest violence was quickly condemned by the speaker of parliament, Osama al-Nujaifi.

In Kut, which lies 150m (95 miles) south-east of Baghdad, the two bomb attacks - one a roadside bomb, the other a car bomb - injured at least 64 people, officials say.

The roadside bomb exploded in the centre of the city, then a car bomb detonated when security forces arrived on the scene, officials said.

"I was on my way to my shop in the market and suddenly I felt myself being thrown to the ground," Saadun Muftin, 26, told the AFP news agency, speaking from the city's Karama hospital.

Meanwhile, in Tikrit, the hometown of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, three policemen were killed and several more wounded when two men wearing vests packed with explosives attacked an Iraqi counter-terrorism unit.

Security officials said they had worn police uniforms to enter the compound in a failed bid to free al-Qaeda prisoners.

Elsewhere:

- The holy city of Najaf was among several targeted
- In Diyala province, at least five blasts resulted in the deaths of at least 10 people
- A suicide car bomber attacked a checkpoint outside a police building near the holy Shia city of Najaf, killing at least four people
- Five or more bombs detonated in Baghdad while, north of the capital, a car bomb killed one person in Taji and at least 14 were injured by a blast in Balad
- One person died as two explosions hit the northern city of Kirkuk and at least two people were killed by a bomb in Karbala
- Blasts also struck Iskandiriyah, south of Baghdad, and Taji, north of the capital, where one person died

"Today's attacks were not a surprise," Baghdad security spokesman Maj Gen Qassim Atta told AFP, adding that several other attacks planned for Monday had been disrupted.

There has been a recent flurry of violence across Iraq, although it is much reduced since a peak in 2006-2007.

Who exactly is behind the current violence remains unclear, but it serves a dual and contradictory purpose, at one and the same time highlighting the declining levels of security whilst warning those willing to countenance a continuing US presence of the trouble that might lie ahead if US forces stay on. In this sense, the bombings are intended to drive a wedge between Washington and Iraqi PM Nouri Maliki. Agreeing in principle to discuss a long-term US presence is one thing, arriving at a deal is quite another.

Iraq probably has enough basic boots on the ground to provide for most of its own security needs. It does though need help in key areas like maritime security and the defence of its air space. US officials present the need for a presence in Iraq in geo-political terms - countering Iranian influence and offering reassurance to America's Gulf allies.

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15. **Threat Resurges In Deadliest Day Of Year For Iraq** (New York Times)

Monday, 15 August 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/16/world/middleeast/16iraq.html?_r=2&partner=MYWAY&ei=5065

A chilling series of fatal attacks across Iraq on Monday sent a disheartening message to the Iraqi and American governments: After hundreds of billions of dollars spent since the United States invasion in 2003, and tens of thousands of lives lost, insurgents remain a potent and perhaps resurging threat to Iraqis and the American troops still in the country.

The 42 apparently coordinated attacks underscored the reality that few places in Iraq are safe. The number of American troops killed this year has jumped, ahead of their planned withdrawal. Monday's strikes against civilians and security forces across the country made it the deadliest day of the year for Iraqis, and it came in many forms: suicide attacks, car bombs, homemade bombs and gunmen.

By sundown, when Iraqis broke their fast in observance of the holy month of Ramadan, the death toll had reached 89, including 3 suicide bombers, and an additional 315 people were wounded. The widespread and lethal nature of the attacks — compared with an average of 14 a day this year — frightened many Iraqis, because it suggested that radical Sunni insurgents, led by Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, may have regained the capacity for the kind of violence that plagued Iraq at the height of the sectarian war in 2006 and 2007.

But it also demonstrated the multiple and simultaneous threats gripping the nation at this pivotal time, with Shiite militants being linked with the killing of American troops, and threatening more violence if they remain, and Iraqi forces clearly unable to preserve the peace.

“Our forces are supposed to have the intelligence capabilities to prevent these types of breaches,” said Shawn Mohammed Taha, a Kurdish member of Parliament who serves on its security committee. “The fact is, the insurgents have acted like our security forces don't even exist.”

No group claimed responsibility for the attacks on Monday. But in a voice recording posted on a Web site for Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia last week, a spokesman for the terrorist group said that it was preparing a wide-scale strike.

“I promise you that we are on the right path,” said the spokesman, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani. “Thank God that we are doing very well here.”

“Do not worry, the days of Zarqawi are going to return soon,” he said, referring to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the former leader of Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia who was killed by American forces in 2006. “We have men who have divorced themselves from life and love death more than you love life, and killing is one of their wishes.”

The attacks came just two weeks after the Iraqi government agreed to formally negotiate with the United States about possibly leaving some troops in Iraq after the end of the year.

“The insurgents are able to attack anywhere and everywhere and no one can really stop them,” Mr. Taha said, adding that the United States has achieved little in trying to improve Iraq’s own intelligence operation.

Still, one political analyst said he saw the attacks as a calculated bid to frighten the Iraqis into asking the American forces to stay behind, because if they completely withdraw, Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia will have lost its rationale for existing.

“If the Americans leave, Al Qaeda will no longer have an excuse to operate throughout the country,” said Hamid Fhadil, a professor of political science at Baghdad University. “Al Qaeda wants Americans to stay here so they will have Iraq as a battlefield to fight the Americans.”

Mr. Fhadil said that one of the biggest problems with the Iraqi security forces was that they were more loyal to armed groups like Al Qaeda and Shiite militias than to the Iraqi government. “This army is not able to take control by itself,” he said. “It’s hard to talk about the existence of an Iraqi Army and a Ministry of Interior without them being loyal to Iraq.”

The attacks began around 3:30 a.m. on Monday in the city of Ramadi, when two improvised bombs exploded near a police patrol, killing three officers and wounding two others. A half-hour later in the city of Baquba, gunmen attacked a checkpoint, killing one police officer.

About 5:45 a.m., two suicide bombers attacked an Iraqi counterterrorism unit in the city of Tikrit, killing three officers.

Fifteen minutes later, gunmen with silencer weapons attacked a group of Iraqi Army officers in Baquba, killing five.

At 7:45 a.m., the day’s most lethal attack occurred when two car bombs exploded in a market in the southern city of Kut, killing 35 people and wounding 71 others.

An hour and a half after that attack, two suicide car bombers struck a police checkpoint in the city of Taji, just north of Baghdad, killing one person and wounding nine, including seven officers.

Saad Ahmed, 38, a policeman who was wounded in Taji, said he opened fire on a suicide bomber who was driving toward him.

The car struck Mr. Ahmed and knocked him to the ground. He said he stood up and fired again. Seconds later, the attacker detonated the car bomb.

“I looked at my body, and I was drowning in blood,” he said at Kadhimiya Hospital in Baghdad, where he was being treated for wounds to his legs, arm and neck. “I just thought about my friends and if they were O.K., because it was 9:15 in the morning and there was a change in shifts.”

He added: “It is Ramadan this month, and we should pray that we won’t kill each other. What crime did we commit? We were just trying to protect our country.”

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Another policeman being treated at the hospital, Amir Khazal, 33, said that he was leaving work at the time of the attack.

“I was just about to leave the checkpoint for vacation,” he said. “All I wanted was to get home to my kids. I heard gunfire at the beginning and then I heard shouting saying, ‘Car bomb, car bomb!’” “After that there was a boom,” he said. “I heard my friend calling me: ‘Help, help, I lost my leg!’”

Around 8 p.m., gunmen dressed in military uniforms stormed into a mosque in the city of Yusufiya, just south of Baghdad. The gunmen read off the names of seven people who had been loyal to the United States and joined the Awakening movement, took them outside the mosque and executed them.

After the execution, the gunmen told the people gathered in the mosque that they were from Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia and then left.

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16. **Two Citizens Injured In TNT Blast In Sulaimaniya** (Aswat al Iraq)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144236&l=1

An explosion took place in northern Iraq's Kurdistan city of Sulaimaniya on Wednesday night, wounding 2 civilians and causing material damage, a city police source reported on Thursday.

“An explosion took place in a small shop, selling chicken in Kurdistan Region's central Sulaimaniya's Mowlawi street on Wednesday night, wounding two persons, one of whom had lost one of his legs,” the police source told Aswat al-Iraq news agency.

He said the blast was caused by a TNT explosion, for which its case was sent to the special security forces for investigation, giving no further details.

Noteworthy is that the said incident is considered the first of its type this year in Sulaimaniya city of Kurdistan Region, known to be witnessing a good security stability.

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17. **Three Civilians Wounded In Southwest Baghdad** (Aswat al Iraq)

Friday, 12 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144242&l=1

A security source said today that three civilians were hit by a bomb blast in southwest Baghdad. The source told Aswat al-Iraq that the wounded were rushed to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. No other details were given.

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18. **Five Persons Injured In Alcohol Shop Blast In Baghdad** (Aswat Al Iraq)

Saturday, 13 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144254&l=1

At least five persons have been injured in an explosive charge blast against an alcohol shop in central Baghdad on Friday night, an Iraqi police source reported on Saturday.

“An explosive charge blew off on Friday night, close to a alcohol-selling shop in west Baghdad’s Yarmouk district,” wounding 5 civilians, who were driven to a nearby hospital for treatment,” the police source told Aswat al-Iraq news agency.

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19. **Four Attacks In Baghdad And Ramadi** (Reuters)

Thursday, 12 August 2011

<http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/factbox-security-developments-in-iraq-august-12>

Following are security developments in Iraq as of 0715 GMT on Friday.

RAMADI - Two bomb exploded in succession near the house of a police officer, killing three people and wounding 23 others, including three policemen, late on Thursday in central Ramadi, 100 km (60 miles) west of Baghdad, a local police source said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb wounded three people, on Thursday night, in the Amil district of southern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol wounded two soldiers, late on Thursday, in Baghdad's southern Doura district, an Interior Ministry source said.

BAGHDAD - Two bombs exploded in succession near a liquor store, and wounded four people, on Thursday, in the Karrada district of central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

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20. **Two Iraqi Police Killed In Attack on Jail** (Reuters)

Monday, 15 August 2011

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/15/us-iraq-violence-idUSTRE77E0O820110815>

Two suicide bombers attacked an Iraqi counter-terrorism unit in Tikrit city on Monday, killing at least two policemen and wounding six in a failed attempt to free al Qaeda prisoners, a police official said.

One attacker detonated his suicide vest hoping to kill a high-ranking counter-terrorism officer and the other was shot dead during the attack, Capt. Jassim al-Jibouri, an officer with the Tikrit counter terrorism unit, said.

"They were attempting to reach the prison that holds more than 100 al Qaeda inmates," Jibouri said.

A hospital source said three policemen were killed and nine wounded in the attack.

Violence in Iraq has fallen sharply since the height of sectarian slaughter, but insurgents are increasingly targeting local security forces as the last American troops prepare to withdraw from the country at the end of the year.

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21. **Six Anbar Cops Wounded In Blasts** (Aswat al Iraq)

Tuesday, 16 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144342&l=1

Six policemen have been injured in two sticky bomb blasts that had been planted under police cars in the city of Rawa in west Iraq's Anbar Province on Tuesday, according to an Anbar Police source.

“Two sticky bombs blew up under police cars, carrying six policemen in Rawa city, west of Anbar Province, wounding the policemen,” the police source told Aswat al-Iraq news agency.

Rawa city is 270 km to the west of Ramadi, the center of Anbar Province.

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22. **Iraqi Civilian Injured In Blast In Rawa** (Aswat al Iraq)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144232&l=1

An Iraqi civilian has been seriously injured in an explosive charge blast under his car in Rawa township in west Iraq's Anbar Province on Wednesday, a police source reported.

“An explosive charge blew off on Wednesday night under a civilian car close to a trade compound in Rawa township, 260 km to the west of Ramadi, the center of Anbar Province, seriously injuring its driver, who was driven to a nearby hospital and causing severe damage to his car,” the police source told Aswat al-Iraq news agency.

Ramadi, the center of Anbar Province, is 110 km to the west of Baghdad.

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23. **Six Wanted Men Arrested, Explosive Charges Confiscated In Kirkuk** (Aswat al Iraq)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

http://en.aswataliraq.info/Default1.aspx?page=article_page&id=144231&l=1

A joint Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army force has detained 6 wanted men and confiscated a number of explosive charges in an inspection campaign southwest of northern Iraq's oil-rich city of Kirkuk on Wednesday, a Kirkuk Police Director reported.

"A Joint Police and Iraqi Army Force has detained 6 wanted men in an inspection campaign in a number of villages, belonging to al-Rashad township, 35 km to the southwest of Kirkuk on Wednesday," Lt-Brigadier Sarhad Qader told Aswat al-Iraq news agency.

Qader said that the Joint Force had also confiscated 7 explosive charges and 5 unlicensed vehicles during the campaign that continued till late Wednesday night.

"The detained persons had opened fire on the Joint Force and their clash with the force had injured one of the wanted men, who failed to escape and were detained.

Kirkuk is 280 km to the northwest of Baghdad.

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24. Improvised Explosive Item Found Near Local High School (KKTv)

Saturday, 13 August 2011

<http://www.kktv.com/home/headlines/127655153.html>

An improvised plastic explosive device was discovered near a local high school after tactical units were called to a local high school to investigate a suspicious package.

Police, SWAT and a bomb disposal unit were all called to Rampart High School Saturday morning after a suspicious item was spotted on the sidewalk in front of the campus. After almost three hours on scene, the item was determined to be an improvised plastic explosive made with Pyrodex powder. Pyrodex is used as a substitute for black powder in fire arms. A canine unit swept the area to determine no other items were hidden on or near the school.

The area has now been deemed safe. Southbound Union was closed during the investigation. The high school is located at Union and Lexington.

The device was detonated; the pieces will now be taken in for further examination. CSPD tells 11 News tactical units also used the opportunity for training.

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25. Man Accused In Attempted Bombing Of Oklahoma Gas Pipeline (CNN)

Friday, 12 August 2011

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/CRIME/08/12/oklahoma.pipe.bomb/>

An Oklahoma man has been arrested for allegedly placing an improvised explosive device under a gas pipeline, but law enforcement officials say they do not believe the man was connected to any type of terrorist group and was not a disgruntled worker.

According to the FBI, Daniel Wells Herriman, 40, was arrested Friday in Seminole County and faces charges of attempting to destroy property used in interstate or foreign commerce.

Two employees of Enerfin Resources spotted the device Wednesday underneath a gas pipeline in Okemah, Oklahoma, and called authorities. A bomb squad disabled the device.

According to a criminal complaint, Herriman called the Seminole County Sheriff's Office 911 line the same day, saying he wanted to turn himself in and said, "I set the bomb under the pipeline in Okemah."

The complaint said that materials similar to those found in the device were found at Herriman's home and that he confessed to making the improvised explosive device. Herriman allegedly told investigators he planted the bomb three days before it was discovered and set a timer for it to go off in the middle of the night. But the bomb did not go off as scheduled.

The court document said the device was made out of PVC pipes, a propane tank, what appeared to be black powder, a wind-up alarm clock and batteries. An FBI spokesman would not comment on how much damage the device might have caused if it had exploded as intended.

The criminal complaint does not say whether Herriman told authorities his motive for placing the device under the pipeline.

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26. **Explosive Found On ODOT Property** (World Link)

Saturday, 13 August 2011

http://theworldlink.com/news/local/article_ec27a19d-16c8-57b1-b24e-eca2a6b2cbaa.html

An improvised explosive device similar to a small pipe bomb was found underneath an Oregon Department of Transportation loader in a sand shed on Friday.

Shortly before 10:30 a.m. at the ODOT property near milepost 5 of Powers Highway, Oregon State Police Explosive Unit techs rendered the device safe, according to OSP Lt. Steve Smartt. The scene was cleared at 2:24 p.m.

The investigation is ongoing.

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27. **One More IED Found In Assam** (IBN)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/one-more-ied-found-in-assam/785071.html>

A powerful Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was recovered and an explosive-supplier arrested along the Assam-north Bengal border in Boxirhat today. Police said an army intelligence group, based on a tip off, raided the house of Ali Asgar Sheikh in Boxirhat along the border in Dhubri district, where from an IED was recovered. [sic] Sheikh, who was arrested, is believed to be an expert in making IEDs, and supplying explosives, arms and ammunition to ULFA and other extremists groups in the area, police said. He has been handed over by the army to the police in Bongaigaon for interrogation. Yesterday a major tragedy was averted when two powerful IEDs were recovered and later defused from a bus in Dhubri. This was planned for explosion in the capital Guwahati city in the run-up to the Independence day celebrations.

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28. **IED Found, Defused At Lilong Ahead Of Independence Day** (Imphal Free Press)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

<http://kanglaonline.com/2011/08/ied-found-defused-at-lilong-ahead-of-i-day/>

An improvised explosive device (IED) planted near Lilong Bridge has been defused successful by the bomb squad of Manipur Police at 2:22 pm today.

According to police sources, the bomb was found out by the locals from the western side of NH-39 near Lilong Bridge. A police team moved to the spot quickly.

The IED was controlled by a remote device. It was defused at the spot itself as it was difficult to move to another place.

SDPO Singjamei, Th Bikramjit stated that the powerful bomb could have caused heavy casualty if it happened to blast during rush hour.

The timely action of the police has averted a major tragedy ahead of Independence Day celebration, he said.

SDPO also thanked 28 Assam Rifles for providing smoke candles used to defuse the bomb.

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29. **Man With IED Held On Train** (Telegraph)

Friday, 12 August 2011

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1110813/jsp/northeast/story_14372615.jsp

A powerful improvised explosive device (IED) was recovered from the Kamakhya-Puri Express while another was found from a house in Goalpara district this morning by a joint team of the army, police and railway police.

Acting on a tip, the train was stopped at Panchratna station and a search mounted, which led to the recovery of the IED from a militant of the Ranjan Daimary faction of NDFB, Kumud Goyari, travelling in coach S6.

Army sources said Goyari, who is from Chirang district, was carrying the IED, weighing 5kg in a bag, and was supposed to deliver it to one Robin Narzary at Bongaigaon.

“The bag was lying on seat number 71 next to which Goyari was sitting. He is under interrogation,” a source said.

He said a hand-written note was found on him, which said he was being sent on an important mission and its success would be good for “us”.

A similar note was found recently along with an IED and couple of pistols from a bus at Alomganj in Dhubri district on August 10.

The BSF recovered two IEDs, each weighing 3kg, and one revolver of 3.38 bore, a 9mm pistol and seven rounds of ammunition from a Goalpara-bound bus at Alomganj.

The source said Goyari was carrying the IED from Lumding. “It was a powerful IED and could have caused a lot of damage,” the source said.

Goalpara superintendent of police Luise Aind said the army, the police and railway recovered the IED and one person was also held in this connection.

“He is being interrogated,” he said.

Another IED was recovered from the house of Dularam Rabha at Hatimura under Dudhnoi police station of Goalpara district.

An army source said acting on a tip, they raided Rabha’s house and recovered the IED weighing 3kg.

“It was gift-wrapped. We are interrogating Rabha to know as to which organisation was behind it. This could only be revealed after interrogation,” an army source said.

In another incident, a former Ulfa cadre, Subhas Barman, was shot at by suspected KLO militants at Kherbari under Golokganj police station in Dhubri district this morning.

Barman sustained five bullet wounds in his abdomen and was brought to Dhubri Civil Hospital but was later shifted to GMCH.

Barman laid down arms in 2005 and started farming his own land at Kherbari village.

The officer-in-charge of Dhubri police station, Harin Deka, said two militants who came on motorbike were from Bengal.

“We suspect the involvement of KLO in the incident as two the militants were from Bengal and it was the second attack on Barman,” Deka added.

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30. **Militants Trigger IED In South Kashmir** (Kashmir Dispatch)

Thursday, 11 August 2011

<http://www.kashmirdispatch.com/more-news/11085227-militants-trigger-ied-in-south-kashmir-police.htm>

Police on Thursday said that unknown militants triggered an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) device in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on the intervening night of Thursday.

"During the intervening night of 10/11.08.2011, some unidentified militant triggered an IED in the compound of Animal Husbandry Office at Tahab, Pulwama," a police officials said.

The explosion resulted in partial damage to a shed, window panes of Animal Husbandry Office and to some nearby shops, he added.

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31. **Army Makes Device Safe In Finglas** (RTE News)

Wednesday, 11 August 2011

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2011/0810/device.html>

An Improvised Explosive Device was made safe by the Army in Dublin late last night.

A bomb disposal team were called to deal with the device, which was found on Dunsink Lane in Finglas.

It was made safe at the scene before being removed. The scene was declared safe at 12.25am.

The Defence Forces said the incident marked the 156th time bomb disposal teams had been called out this year, and the 27th occasion they had made an IED safe.

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32. **Eight Turkish Soldiers Killed In Blast** (Reuters)

Wednesday, 17 August 2011

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-rt-us-turkey-kurdstre77g16f-20110817,0,4018346.story>

Eight Turkish soldiers were killed in a suspected bomb explosion in Turkey's southeastern Hakkari province on Wednesday, security sources told Reuters.

The cause of the blast was thought to be a roadside remote-controlled explosive device detonated by Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants, the sources said.

Turkish military reinforcements were dispatched by ground and air to the Cukurca district which borders Iraq, the sources said, adding that others had also been wounded in the blast.

Gunfire could be heard in the surrounding mountains following the explosion.

The latest deaths come only days after three Turkish soldiers were killed in an ambush by PKK guerrillas as they returned from a patrol in the southeastern province of Sirnak.

More than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict since the PKK took up arms for Kurdish self-rule in 1984.

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33. **Explosive Device Detonates At Irrigation Agency** (Gulf News)

Saturday, 13 August 2011

<http://gulfnews.com/news/world/philippines/explosive-device-detonates-at-irrigation-agency-1.850829>

Security forces in Central Mindanao were put on alert yesterday after an improvised explosive device exploded inside the compound of the government irrigation agency in South Cotabato.

Col. Prudencio Asto, spokesman of the Army 6th Infantry Division said an improvised explosive device exploded inside the National Irrigation Authority (MIA) complex in the town of Amas in Kidapawan City around 1am yesterday.

He said two people, believed to be the bomb carriers, died from the explosion caused by an 81mm mortar round that was rigged to a timer.

Manampan Dimalen of Pagalungan, Maguindanao immediately died from the blast while his companion, Kalim Indigay of Kidapawan City, died later from his wounds.

A security watchman guarding the complex also sustained injuries from shards of broken glass.

Asto said it was likely that the bomb prematurely exploded.

The official said that as a result of the incident, military and police forces in Central Mindanao had been placed on alert.

Meanwhile, a military source told Gulf News that it was likely that the failed bombing attempt was targeting a major government complex providing irrigation to the vast rice fields of Central Mindanao, the Malitubog-Maridagao Irrigation Project or the Mal-Mar dam.

The controversial Mal-Mar dam is a strategically important facility for the region and has been the root of conflict between armed Moro clans vying for political and economic control of the area.

Funded with the help of the Japanese government, the Mal-Mar dam was built to irrigate some 13,000 hectares of farmland in Muslim as well as Christian areas of North Cotabato.

However, frequent skirmishes in the area caused delays in its construction. Only about 2,000 hectares of agricultural area were initially projected to benefit from the project, the source said.

"Irrigation from the Mal-Mar dam is important because it enables the farmers to plant the whole year, however, because of the delays and other problems in the dam project, only a few of the planters favoured by the armed groups are able to cultivate their land," he said.

He stressed that Moro as well as Christian groups need to ensure an end to the inter-clan skirmishes so that the dam will be used to benefit more people.

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Aside from the Mal-Mar dam, the government last December approved the 6.9-billion peso (Dh594 million) Mal-Mar II Project which will irrigate 9,700 hectares in Maguindanao and Cotabato.

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34. **Military On High Alert After Tacurong Bombing** (Inquiror)

Tuesday, 16 August 2011

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/regions/08/16/11/pnp-suspects-ampatuan-link-tacurong-blast>

The Armed Forces of the Philippines are on high alert in Sultan Kudarat following the bombing of the convoy of Maguindanao Governor Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu on Monday, which left two persons dead and six injured.

According to 6th Infantry Division chief Major General Rey Ardo, the military intensified their checkpoints in Tacurong City as the Philippine National Police (PNP) revved up their investigation of the bombing.

Ardo said his forces had earlier deployed checkpoints in the area as a response to the on-going conflict between members of the Moro-Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and its break-away group, the Muslim Bangsamoro Freedom Fighters, led by wanted rebel leader Umbra Kato.

“Ang problema nga natin kung ang motive talaga e (Our problem is really to find out the motive),” Ardo said. However, he refused to speculate as the PNP are still investigating who was behind the bombing which Gov. Mangudadatu had claimed was intended for him.

Ardo added that Mangudadatu had military and police escorts, and during the attack on Monday afternoon, the security team was part of the convoy.

Meanwhile, the police have identified the casualties as Raffy Parnas, a bystander who died on the spot after the car bomb exploded past 3PM Monday along Alunan Ave. in Tacurong City, while Board Member Russman Sinsuat died at the hospital shortly past midnight on Tuesday. Sinsuat’s son, Russman Jr. , lost his leg, which doctors had to amputate, due to severe injuries incurred in the blast.

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35. **Experts Defuse ‘Powerful’ Bomb In Sultan Kudarat** (News Info)

Sunday, 14 August 2011

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An alert bystander prevented what could have been a bloody Saturday afternoon at a terminal here when he became suspicious of a yellow sack left unattended, and informed the military about it.

The yellow sack turned out to contain a deadly improvised explosive device (IED), according to Col. Prudencio Asto, spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division, quoting a report from the military-led Task Force Talakudong.

“It was a very powerful IED and it was meant to kill,” Asto said even as he lauded the man identified only as “Rolly” for being alert.

He said the explosive was discovered and defused by Army bomb experts at a road leading to the city’s bus terminal.

The military report said Rolly saw a man disembark from multi-cab passenger jeep carrying a yellow sack before noon Saturday. After few minutes, he noticed the man leaving but did not carry the sack making him wonder why it was left unattended.

He then alerted the Army by phone.

Bomb experts’ investigation showed the IED was fashioned from 81 mm mortar, a 9-volt battery and a mobile phone serving as trigger mechanism.

The mortar, which authorities said was rusting, was turned over to the Army Explosive and Ordnance Division for proper disposition.

The foiled bombing attempt came hours after a suspected bomb carrier was blasted to death in a pre-mature explosion of an IED he was carrying in Kidapawan City.

At about dawn on Friday, the suspected bomber and his companion were standing at a roadside in Barangay Patadon when a speeding car with glaring headlights passed by.

This prompted the two to hide behind a tree. It was then that the explosive went off prematurely.

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