

Afghan bomb kills 79th Canadian soldier

by UPI

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan -- A roadside bombing in Afghanistan killed a Canadian soldier just days away from the end of his six-month tour of duty, military officials said. Trooper Michael Yuki Hayakaze, 25, was in an armored vehicle as part of a resupply mission for Afghan troops 30 miles west of the Canadian base at Kandahar airfield, Brig. Gen. Guy Laroche told reporters. Hayakaze was a member of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians), based out of Edmonton, Alberta, and was to have returned to Canada in days, a Canwest News Service correspondent reported. A military statement said Hayakaze was evacuated from the scene by helicopter but was pronounced dead on arrival at the Multinational Medical Unit at Kandahar airfield. Military officials said there has been no direct combat with Taliban or al-Qaida fighters in the region this year, with militants relying solely on roadside bombs as their weapon of choice. Canadian Defense Minister Peter MacKay issued a statement in Ottawa praising Hayakaze and all of the 2,200 Canadian troops in Afghanistan. "This cowardly attack will not deter us from carrying out this important and much needed mission with our NATO partners," MacKay said.

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