Beat: Miscellaneous

Man wearing Afghan police uniform kills 2 British soldiers

-, 30.10.2012, 16:37 Time

USPA News - A man wearing an Afghan police uniform opened fire Tuesday at a checkpoint in southern Afghanistan, killing two British service members, military officials in both countries said. It is believed to be the latest in a series of so-called green-on-blue attacks.

The incident happened on Tuesday morning when an individual wearing the uniform of an Afghan policeman opened fire at foreign troops at a checkpoint in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand Province, located in Afghanistan`s volatile south. Two British soldiers from 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles were killed. "The loss of these soldiers is a huge blow to The Royal Gurkha Rifles and everyone serving in Task Force Helmand. Our thoughts are with their families, friends and fellow Gurkhas at this time," said Major Laurence Roche, a spokesman for Task Force Helmand. The victim`s next-of-kin have been informed. A spokesperson for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) confirmed the incident, but said it was not immediately clear if the attacker was an actual police officer. "We do not yet have the operational detail to know whether this was an insider attack or not," the spokesperson said. "He (the gunman) is currently being pursued by ISAF and ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces) forces." If Tuesday`s incident is confirmed to be an insider attack, the shooting would add to an increasingly frequent series of attacks by Afghan security forces against foreign troops. At least 53 foreign troops have been killed by members of the Afghan security forces in more than 40 incidents this year alone. Such incidents were virtually unheard of just a few years ago. There are currently more than 112,500 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, including some 74,400 U.S. troops and 9,500 British soldiers. U.S. President Barack Obama previously ordered a drawdown of 23,000 U.S. troops by the end of this summer, and 15,000 of them have already left in recent weeks. Foreign combat troops are due to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-140/man-wearing-afghan-police-uniform-kills-2-british-soldiers.html

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