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## Canadian security meeting attacked by suicide bomber

By JIM WELLS, Sun Media

Kandahar City, Afghanistan — A suicide bomber dressed as an Afghan National Policeman blew himself up killing three others outside a District Centre where local tribal leaders were meeting.

The blast occurred at 11:30 am local time on Monday and blew out the windows of the headquarters building.

"I saw three bodies," said MCpl Marc Arsenault, from Gagetown, NB.

"Two were intact, one was mangled and the fourth was only legs with sandals still intact. Blood was everywhere.

"There's nothing that prepares a man mentally for that," said Arsenault as he returned from the scene to the Provincial Reconstruction Team Headquarters.

Canadian soldiers found body parts 75 m from the blast site.

The Canadian military were on scene to attend a shura, a local meeting between leaders to discuss concerns or problems.

Warrant Officer Barry Bastow, from Halifax, N.S., was in the shura when the blast occurred, blowing out windows in the two-storey building.

"I felt it through my whole body," said Bastow who is with a civil military cooperation unit, which acts as a liason between local leaders and the military.

"When the glass blew in, it was seconds."

Barstow said he and the district leader were discussing security when the blast occurred.

"That's the reality here," said Barstow who is a firefighter.

After the blast, Canadians helped secure the area and assess the damage.

U.S. Major John Payne, who was interviewing local leaders in the headquarters building said the suicide bomber entered the compound claiming to be Afghan National Police and when he wasn't recognized and challenged the man detonated the bomb on his body.

"It was a concussion and a large boom," said Payne, who was on the far side of the building from the blast.

"It had to be a large explosion."

Apart from the bomber, two ANP officers were killed as well as an unidentified civilian, said Payne, a National Guardsman from Brooklyn, N.Y.

"Luckily the blast happened on the farthest point of the compound and the blast itself was pretty much contained," said Payne, who mentors local police.

Payne added that many windows on the fairly recently constructed building were blown out.

"It was a sad event, but it could have been much worse," said Payne.

"I can thank the ANP for being as alert as they were. If they weren't as alert as they were he could



**The scene outside the District Centre near Kandahar where a suicide bomber attacked. (Jim Wells/ SUN MEDIA)**

have entered the compound and wreaked a lot more havoc."

"Hats off to them."

Payne added the ANP are doing the best they can with what limited resources they have.

[jim.wells@sunmedia.ca](mailto:jim.wells@sunmedia.ca)