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#### The Frontier Post

## Australia loses 39th soldier

#### October 24, 2012

Sunday (Agencies): Australia has lost a 39th soldier in Afghanistan with Prime Minister Julia Gillard warning that while the mission is on track there's no way of being there without risk. Ms Gillard said all Australians would mourn the death of the as-yet unnamed 24-year-old special forces soldier, killed by an insurgent improvised explosive device (IED) late on Sunday Australian time.

Because the operation is continuing, defence has released few details of the incident. The soldier's family has been notified but want no personal details released at this stage. Ms Gillard said Australia had lost a brave soldier who was going about difficult and dangerous work.

"And his loss will be mourned by the whole nation," she told reporters in Canberra. The soldier is the seventh digger to die in Afghanistan this year, the 39th Australian serviceman lost since 2002 and the 19th from the special forces.

Ms Gillard, who visited Afghanistan this month, said the troops were in good spirits and determined to see the mission through so that Afghan forces were able to take full responsibility for their own security.

"Our predictions of Oruzgan province is that there will still be active fighting needed against the insurgency," she said.

"We will though, still engage in special (forces) operations. And there is no way of being in Afghanistan that comes without risk."