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ANA loses 830 soldiers in 7 months

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The Afghan National Army (ANA) has lost 830 soldiers over the past seven years, compared with 568 during the corresponding period last year, a Ministry of Defence (MoD) official said on Tuesday.

Most of the ANA fatalities resulted from suicide attacks and roadside bombings, a weapon of choice for the Taliban fighters, MoD spokesman Gen. Zahir Azimi told a news conference in Kabul.

He claimed that the insurgents had been weakened considerably, and that they were no longer capable of face-to-face combat with Afghan security forces. As a consequence, the rebels had resorted to bomb attacks, he said.

There would be no security concerns after 2014, when NATO-led combat troops are scheduled to leave the country, the spokesman believed, arguing that the global fraternity had promised long-term political and financial assistance to Afghanistan.

Azimi announced the formation of a commission, comprised of generals, that would investigate the performance of senior ANA commanders. Based on its evaluation, top army officials will be reshuffled.

Pakistan army chief, Gen. Pervez Kiyani, and his British counterpart will visit Kabul soon for talks with defence officials, according to Azimi, who gave no specific dates of their trips.