

Afghanistan: Kabul blasts are 'shamefaced reminder' of the Taliban's failure to protect minorities



PUBLISHED SEP 30, 2022
BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
UK

Dozens dead and injured at an educational centre in the Hazara Shiite community area

'Since their takeover, the Taliban have done little to put in place any measures for the protection of the public, especially of Shia-Hazaras' - Samira Hamidi

Responding to the reports of a suicide bomb attack in Kabul today, Samira Hamidi, Amnesty International's South Asia Campaigner, said:

"Today's horrific attack is a shamefaced reminder of the inaptitude and utter failure of the Taliban, as de-facto authorities, to protect the people of Afghanistan. "Urgent steps must be taken to ensure the safety of all people under the Taliban's rule, especially the members of minority communities. "Since their takeover, the Taliban have done little to put in place any measures for the protection of the public, especially of Shia-Hazaras who have been systematically targeted largely by the Islamic State in schools, mosques, training centres and public places. Instead, their actions have further aggravated the risk to the lives of the people of Afghanistan especially those belonging to ethnic and minority communities. "It is essential that the de-facto authorities immediately carry out an effective, thorough, and independent investigation into the attacks, which should be conducted in line with international law and standards. Those suspected of criminal responsibility for the suicide bombing must face justice in fair trials before ordinary civilian courts and without recourse to death penalty."

The bomb blasts took place in the early morning hours today at Kaaj Educational Centre in west Kabul where students in packed classrooms were given mock tests in order to prepare for their college entrance exam.

According to initial local media reports around 100 students and employees of this centre were killed and injured, among whom at least 21 were girls. Meanwhile the Police in Kabul have reportedly said at least 19 were killed and many more injured in the attack at the time of publication of this press release.

In April this year, bomb blasts targeted schools in the same Hazara Shiite community area of Dasht-e-Barchi in west Kabul. Amnesty has repeatedly documented the targeted killing of ethnic minority Hazara Shiite community members following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan last year.

According to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) report Human rights in Afghanistan: 15 August 2021 – 15 June 2022) 2106 civilian casualties (700 killed, 1406 wounded) were recorded in the country in the one year since the takeover by the Taliban.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of Amnesty International UK, on Sep 30, 2022. For more information subscribe and [follow us](#).

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