



Terrorist Bomb Attack in Kabul Claimed by ISIS Kills 41

Afghanistan's Interior Ministry reported on December 28 that 41 people were killed and 30 wounded by multiple bomb blasts at a Shiite Tebyan cultural center in Kabul. ISIS (also known as The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL) claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement released by the ISIS-affiliated Amaq News Agency.



The Qatar-based Aljazeera news agency reported that the cultural center is part of a compound that also contains the Afghan Voice news agency and a religious school.

A report from the Gandhara news network observed that initial reports suggested the attack had targeted the Afghan Voice news agency, but Interior Ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said later that the blasts were aimed at the cultural center, which is near the news agency's office.

Rahimi said a suicide bomber entered the building and blew himself up during a crowded ceremony marking the 38th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

"We were shocked and didn't feel the explosion at first, but we saw smoke coming up from below," Ali Reza Ahmadi, a journalist with the Afghan Voice news agency was quoted by the Australian Broadcasting Company. Ahmadi was sitting in his office above the center when the attack took place.

"Survivors were coming out. I saw one boy with cuts to his feet and others with burns all over their faces," Ahmadi said. "About 10 minutes after the first explosion, there was another one outside on the street and then another one."

Another journalist, Ehsanullah Amiri, who was at the scene of the blast, reported that a crowd of just under 100 people were at the cultural center when the bomber infiltrated the crowd and detonated the device.

Amiri said that ambulances and police vehicles transported the dead and wounded to nearby hospitals, as security forces cordoned off the site and blocked the main road approaching the scene.

CNN reported that both Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan have been plagued with attacks on its military, police, and civilian populations. The report noted that ISIS and the Taliban have both carried out several attacks in the country this year, and they have also been fighting each other over territory, particularly in the eastern area of the country. However, the Taliban have denied responsibility for this latest bomb attack.

Earlier this week at least 10 people were killed after a suicide attacker detonated a bomb in another attack claimed by ISIS. CNN cited a statement from Afghanistan's Interior Ministry spokesman, Nasrat Rahimi, who said that attack targeted an office of the National Directorate of Security. The directorate is located near the U.S. Embassy and other diplomatic missions.

ISIS, which has been designated by many countries as a terrorist organization, first gained prominence in 2014 when it drove Iraqi government forces out of key cities in Western Iraq, including Mosul. It



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entered Syria in 2015, where it engaged in attacks on the government forces of Bashar al Assad and allied itself with opposition rebels fighting against the government. Also in 2015, Afghan officials confirmed that ISIS had a military presence in Afghanistan.

The Taliban have been in Afghanistan much longer than ISIS, having their origins among the Islamic mujahideen fighters who fought against Soviet forces after the Soviet Union intervened and occupied Afghanistan in 1979. The CIA and Saudi Arabic General Intelligence Directorate (GID) funneled funding and equipment through the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence Agency (ISI) to the Afghan mujahideen. The renowned British Professor Carole Hillenbrand concluded that the Taliban arose from those U.S.-Saudi-Pakistan-supported mujahideen: "The West helped the Taliban to fight the Soviet takeover of Afghanistan."

After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, the Taliban gained control of much of the country. By 1998, the Taliban's Emirate controlled 90 percent of Afghanistan. They provided a safe haven for Osama bin Laden, the supposed mastermind of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. In October 2001, the United States, with allies including the Afghan Northern Alliance, invaded Afghanistan and routed the Taliban regime.

However, the Taliban were never eradicated completely and as the United States withdrew its forces from the country in piecemeal fashion, they gained control over large areas of the country.

All U.S. troops in Afghanistan were scheduled to have been withdrawn in 2016, but the U.S. government decided to maintain a force of 8,400 troops indefinitely, due to Taliban resurgence in the country.

While the September 11 attacks may have provided justification for the United States to remove the Taliban regime that had harbored Osama bin Laden from power, the presence of thousands of U.S. troops in the country for 16 years has evidently done little to make the nation more secure.

In the case of ISIS, the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent removal of that country's ruler, Saddam Hussein, only served to destabilize that nation. While Saddam was a harsh ruler, he was not a terrorist, nor did he support terrorism. His removal created a vacuum that the fledgling ISIS terrorists quickly filled. Even worse, the Obama administration sent support to rebels in Syria attempting to overthrow Bashar al Assad, some of whom were joined by ISIS fighters who shared in that support. That support was partially responsible for helping ISIS grow from a third-rate terrorist group to a powerful force that threatens all of the Middle East, and even beyond. Former Rep. Ron Paul noted in a column last October:

After six years of war the Syrian government has nearly defeated ISIS and al-Qaeda and the US-backed "moderates" turned out to be either Islamist extremists or Kurdish soldiers for hire.

According to a recent report, the US has shipped two billion dollars worth of weapons to fighters in Syria via eastern Europe. Much of these weapons ended up in the hands of ISIS directly, or indirectly through "moderates" taking their weapons with them while joining ISIS or al-Qaeda.

The US is not about to leave on its own. With ISIS all but defeated in Syria, many in Washington are calling for the US military to continue its illegal occupation of parts of the country to protect against Iranian influence! Of course before the US military actions in Iraq and Syria there was far less Iranian influence in the region! So US foreign interventionism is producing new problems that can only be solved by more US interventionism? The military industrial complex could not have dreamed of a better scheme to rob the American people while enriching themselves!



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What have we achieved in Syria? Nothing good.

The same could be said of our intervention in Afghanistan. As this latest terrorist attack by ISIS in Kabul indicates: What have we achieved after 16 years in Afghanistan? Nothing good.

Photo showing aftermath of suicide bomb attack in Kabul: AP Images

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