



Q11117 - Afghanistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 22 October 2009

Reports about the current security situation in Kabul.

In a section titled “The Taliban is back” an *International Council on Security and Development* report states:

“Of the four doors leading out of Kabul, three are now compromised by Taliban activity. The roads to the west, towards the Afghan National Ring Road through Wardak to Kandahar have become unsafe for Afghan or international travel by the time travellers reach the entrance to Wardak province, which is about thirty minutes from the city limits. The road south to Logar is no longer safe for Afghan or international travel. The road east to Jalalabad is not safe for Afghan or international travel once travellers reach the Sarobi Junction which is about an hour outside of the city. Of the two roads leaving the city to the north only one – the road towards the Panjshir valley, Salang tunnel and Mazar – is considered safe for Afghan and international travel. The second road towards the north which leads to the Bagram Air Base is frequently used by foreign and military convoys and subject to insurgent attacks. By blocking the doors to the city in this way, the Taliban insurgents are closing a noose around the city and establishing bases close to the city from which to launch attacks inside it. Using these bases, the Taliban and insurgent attacks in Kabul have increased dramatically – including kidnapping of Afghans and foreigners, various bomb attacks and assassinations.” (International Council on Security and Development (December 2008) *Struggle for Kabul: The Taliban Advance*, p.5)

In a section titled “Political developments and elections” (paragraph 16) a *UN General Assembly Security Council* report states:

“The intensity of insurgency operations increased in the week before the election. On 15 August, a vehicle-borne suicide bomb exploded near the International Security Assistance Force base in Kabul City, killing at least seven people and wounding another 70. Another vehicle-borne suicide bomber careened into an international military convoy on 18 August, killing two International Security Assistance Force soldiers and seven civilians, and injuring at least another 50. Two UNAMA national staff members who were nearby were killed in the attack and one was wounded. These incidents were the first suicide attacks to occur in Kabul City since March 2009.” (UN General Assembly Security Council (22 September 2009) *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security*, p.4)

An *IRIN News* report on the firing of rockets into Kabul states:

“In the past month at least 10 rockets have been fired on different parts of Kabul, often killing or wounding civilians, according to the Ministry of Interior (MoI). In

less than a month, well over a dozen civilians have also died in a number of suicide attacks in Kabul: on 8 September a suicide attack near the airport killed two civilians and wounded six; on 18 August a suicide attack killed 10 (including two UN national staff) and injured 50; and a suicide attack in front of the NATO premises in Kabul on 15 August killed nine and wounded 90, most of them civilians." (IRIN News (9 September 2009) *Afghanistan: Growing insecurity in Kabul*)

A *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* report on suicide attacks in Kabul states:

"Near-simultaneous suicide attacks targeting civilians and government personnel in the Afghan capital, Kabul, have left at least 26 dead and 55 wounded. Eight suicide bombers are believed to have died while carrying out the midmorning attacks, for which the Taliban has claimed responsibility." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (11 February 2009) *Coordinated Taliban Attacks Kill At Least 26 In Kabul*)

A *BBC News* report states:

"A suicide car bomber has killed 10 people in an attack on a convoy of Western troops in the Afghan capital. More than 50 people were wounded in the explosion, which came despite heightened security ahead of Thursday's presidential election. A Nato soldier and nine Afghans, including two UN staff, died in the explosion, the Nato-led force said." (BBC News (18 August 2009) *Deadly pre-poll attack hits Kabul*)

See also *Voice of America* report which states:

"Eight people died, including two Afghan staff members of the United Nations and at least one foreign soldier, while more than 50 other people were wounded, in the latest wave of Taliban violence around Kabul. The insurgents, who are vowing to disrupt Thursday's national election, have escalated strikes on the capital and other parts of the country. The Taliban attacked in the capital area again Tuesday, attempting to make good on a vow to disrupt this week's presidential election. A suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden vehicle into a supply convoy of foreign forces on a busy highway on the eastern outskirts of Kabul. The attack came just hours after a pair of rockets fell harmlessly between the Presidential Palace and the Defense Ministry - the latest targeting of the most secure area of the Afghan capital. The latest Taliban suicide bombing took a heavy toll on Afghan civilians, including children." (Voice of America (18 August 2009) *Taliban Escalate Attacks on Kabul Two Days Before Presidential Election*)

A *BBC News* report on a rocket attack in September 2009 states:

"A rocket attack on the Afghan capital Kabul has killed three civilians, a senior police official says. The rocket hit a house in the western part of the capital, killing three members of a family, including a young girl, the investigator said. Two other children - members of the same family - were reportedly wounded. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack. During August suspected

Taliban militants fired a series of rockets into the city.” (BBC News (7 September 2009) *'Three die' in Kabul rocket blast*)

A *BBC News* report on the killing of six Italian soldiers in September 2009 states:

“Six Italian soldiers have been killed in a bomb attack on a military convoy in the Afghan capital, Kabul. Two military vehicles were reported to have been hit by a suicide car bomb. At least 10 civilians were also killed and dozens injured, officials said. The Taliban have claimed responsibility for the attack in the city centre.” (BBC News (17 September 2009) *Italian forces die in Kabul blast*)

A *BBC News* report on a suicide bombing in October 2009 states:

“A Taliban suicide bomber has attacked the Indian embassy in Kabul, killing at least 17 people in a second attack on the building in little over a year. Afghan officials say a car bomber blew himself up near the Indian embassy and the Afghan interior ministry. The Taliban said it carried out the attack and the embassy was the target. Kabul has been attacked regularly in recent months, and the Indian embassy was itself bombed in July 2008, with dozens of people killed. Most strikes in the capital target foreign forces or government offices - but civilians are also often killed. More recently, six Italian soldiers were killed last month in a bomb attack on a military convoy.” (BBC News (8 October 2009) *Afghan bomb strikes India embassy*)

See also report from *The Guardian* on this incident which states:

“A suicide bomb exploded outside the Indian embassy in Kabul this morning, killing 17 people and wounding dozens. The force of the rush-hour blast flattened walls and rattled windows up to a mile away. Television news footage showed soldiers and passersby pulling a severed leg from a destroyed vehicle. The Afghanistan interior ministry, which is based in the same road as the Indian embassy, confirmed that 15 civilians and two Afghan police officers were killed. Officials said at least 76 people were wounded. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the explosion and confirmed that the embassy was the target.” (The Guardian (8 October 2009) *Deadly Kabul bomb targets Indian embassy*)

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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