



Suicide Bombing in Kabul

Information Cutoff Date: May 18, 2010 11:40 A.M.

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Overview

- At approximately 8:15 A.M. on May 18, a suicide bomber drove his vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) into a NATO convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan.
 - At least 18 people were killed, including 6 International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops, and 47 others were wounded.
 - Most of the Afghan casualties were traveling in a bus near the targeted convoy.
 - The attack occurred during rush hour.
- Deadliest attack in 2010 on foreign forces operating in Kabul
- Afghani Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack and stated that the convoy was their target



Authorities at the incident site

Source: BBC News



Casualties from the blast

Source: BBC News

Attack Details

- The suicide bomber was able to penetrate tight security.
 - The bomber was identified as a young man from Kabul named Nizamuddin.
 - The VBIED was a Toyota minivan carrying 1,650 pounds of explosives.
 - The bomber reportedly cruised the city looking for a target.
- Incident site is near the Afghan parliament and other government buildings, a military recruiting/training center, a hospital and the American University of Afghanistan.
- Five of the coalition deaths were Americans and the 6th is reported to be Canadian.
- Many of the Afghan casualties were women and children.



On-scene vehicle wreckage
Source: Ahmad Massoud/Associated Press



Troops responding to the attack
Source: BBC News

Background Information

- The attack follows a 3-month effort to stop attacks in Kabul, leading to 115 arrests.
- Security in Kabul was upgraded following a series of Taliban attacks against hotels and guesthouses catering to foreigners on February 26.
- The Taliban announced last week a nationwide offensive against coalition forces, including the use of suicide tactics.
 - Coalition and Afghan officials dismissed the threat as propaganda and doubted the group's ability to launch such attacks.
- The attack took place shortly before President Hamid Karzai was to speak with the press following his return from meetings in the U.S. with President Barack Obama.



Press conference with Presidents Obama and Karzai in Washington, DC

Source: *Washington Post*



Implications for NYC

- Historically, terrorists have shown a determination to identify and exploit security gaps and vulnerabilities whenever and wherever possible.
- Vigilance and heightened situational awareness among security personnel and civilians are the best ways to identify suspicious activity that could indicate a pending attack.
- Whether operating in Afghanistan or New York, terrorists must take the same tradecraft steps in any given attack.
 - Each of these steps present operational vulnerabilities that can be exploited to disrupt an attack.



Sources

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