At least 23 dead after suicide bomb blast at educational center in Kabul

Kabul, Afghanistan [CNN —](#)
A suicide bomb attack on an education center in Kabul has killed at least 23 people, most of whom are believed to be young women, in the latest sign of the deteriorating security situation in the Afghan capital.

The explosion took place on Friday at the Kaaj education center, in a predominantly Hazara neighborhood — an ethnic minority group *(who are frequently Shia Muslims)* that has long faced oppression.

Students were taking a practice university entrance exam at 7:30 a.m., local time (11 p.m. ET) when the blast first took place, Kabul Police Spokesman Khalid Zadran told CNN.

Abdu Ghayas Momand, a doctor from Ali Jinah Hospital, where some of the victims have been taken, said 23 people had been killed and 36 more injured. There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack.

Taiba Mehtarkhil, an eyewitness, told CNN many of the casualties were young women. She had gone to the center to look for her friend after she heard news of the attack and was confronted with scenes of chaos and despair, she said. Mehtarkhil's friend survived the attack as she was running late and hadn't reached the classroom when the blast occurred, she said.

Another eyewitness, a 20-year-old who did not want to be named for security reasons, told CNN she was about 20 steps from the gate when the explosion threw her to the ground. "When I got inside, I saw many of my classmates in blood. I found out that the explosion had happened inside my classroom," she said, through tears.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid condemned the attack in a tweet Friday. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan calls the attack on Kaj training center in the 13th district of Kabul a big crime, strongly condemns it, and expresses deepest sympathy to the families of the victims of this incident."

Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in August 2021, there have been multiple attacks against the Hazara community. The Islamic State of Khorasan Province has claimed responsibility for 13 attacks against the Hazaras and been linked to three more that have killed and injured at least 700 people, according to Human Rights Watch.

"The Taliban authorities have done little to protect these communities from suicide bombings and other unlawful attacks or to provide necessary medical care and other assistance to

victims and their families," the report added.