

'Bacha bazi': Taliban using child sex slaves to target Afghan police, claims report

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Tarin Kot: Taliban militants are reportedly using sex slaves, boys in particular, to penetrate into the Afghan police forces and carry out insider attacks.

According to an AFP report, in order to infiltrate Afghan security ranks, Taliban is using the pervasive practice of "bacha bazi" where young boys are sexually exploited.

The ancient custom of "bacha bareesh", which means boys without beards, is still prevalent in Afghanistan, especially in the province of Uruzgan where young boys are sexually assaulted by senior police officials.

"The Taliban are sending boys "beautiful boys, handsome boys" to penetrate checkpoints and kill, drug and poison policemen," Uruzgan's former police chief Ghulam Sakhi Rogh Lewanai told AFP.

"They have figured out the biggest weakness of police forces "bacha bazi," he further added.

Afghanistan's security agencies are completely rattled by the assaults that signify the sexual abuse of young boys by both parties in the conflict.

Backing Rogh Lewanai's view, a senior provincial officer said, "it's easier tackling suicide bombers than bacha attackers".

The killings in the past two years indicate how this perverse technique is affecting security in Uruzgan, a remote province which is now supposed to be on the brink of collapse.

21-year-old Matiullah, a policeman who was the only survivor from an insider attack in Dehrawud district last year, said that Taliban insurgents are using young boys as honey traps.

He said the attacker was the sex slave of the checkpoint commander who went on a shooting spree one night, killing seven policemen as they slept.

"He brought the Taliban inside and poked all the bodies with rifle butts to see if anyone was alive. I pretended to be dead," said Matiullah.

On the other hand, Taliban, who banned bacha bazi during their 1996-2001 rule, has rejected use of child sex slaves for staging attacks against the Afghan security in the south.

"We have a special mujahideen brigade for such operations "all grown men with beards," a Taliban spokesperson said.

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