

Over dozen Nepalese security guards killed in Kabul suicide attack

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Kabul: Over a dozen Nepalese security guards were killed after a suicide bomber attacked a minibus carrying them today in Kabul along the main road to the eastern city of Jalalabad.

The official, who did not want to give his name as was not authorized to speak to the media, said an exact figure was not possible because of the confusion surrounding the blast. He says seven others were thought to be hurt the Monday morning attack.

Another police official who refused to give a toll said there were "multiple casualties" among the bus passengers who were "employees of a foreign compound".

One police official at the scene said the yellow bus had been carrying government employees to their offices in the city.

Dozens of police and many ambulances rushed to the scene to take the victims to hospitals.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Taliban insurgents have increased attacks on both government employees and Afghan security forces across the country.

It is the first attack in Kabul since the start of holy fasting month of Ramadan on June 6. The last attack in the Afghan capital on April 19 left 64 dead and more than 340 wounded.

That attack was claimed by the Taliban, who have been waging an insurgency against the Western-backed Kabul government since they were ousted from power by a US-led invasion in late 2001.

Washington recently announced an expansion of the US military's authority to conduct air strikes against the Taliban, significantly boosting Afghan forces who have limited close air-support capacities.

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