

## **At least 22 killed in twin blasts near Afghan parliament in Kabul, Taliban claims responsibility**

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**Kabul:** Two loud explosions rocked the Afghan capital of Kabul on Tuesday, killing at least 22 and wounding 43 others, the government said.

### **Afghan security forces stand guard near the site of two blasts in Kabul**

Among the dead are four women, the Interior Ministry said.

The Taliban, which is waging a 15-year war against the U.S.-backed government, claimed responsibility for the attack.

The blasts occurred near the Afghan parliament, an area that includes government and lawmakers' offices.

The first explosion, carried out by a suicide bomber, was quickly followed by a second, caused by car bomb parked near the same site, interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

"They targeted employees of parliament, there have been casualties," a second security source said.

Sediqqi said there were casualties but that exact numbers remain unclear. Public health ministry spokesman Ismail Kawasi only confirmed that three wounded civilians were brought to hospital.

Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the Kabul attacks.

Earlier in the day, a suicide bomber on foot struck in southern Helmand province, killing at least seven people, said Gen. Agha Noor Kemtoz, the provincial police chief. The target of the attack was a guesthouse used by a provincial intelligence official in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand, said Kemtoz.

Those killed include civilian and military personnel, and six others were wounded in the attack, Kemtoz added . A car full of explosives was found nearby.

No one claimed responsibility for the Helmand attack but the Taliban frequently use use suicide attacks or roadside bombs to target government officials and Afghan security forces across the country.

- (With AP inputs)