

Kabul hotel attack: 6 civilians killed, all four attackers shot dead; Taliban claims responsibility

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Kabul: Terrorists stormed the upscale Intercontinental Hotel here, triggering heavy fighting with security forces that ended on Sunday leaving 10 persons including all four attackers dead, authorities said.

Seven others were wounded in the attack, Afghan Interior Ministry spokesperson Nasrat Rahimi told Efe news.

Meanwhile, AFP reported that Taliban has claimed responsibility for the attack, saying that five of its men were involved in the attack.Â

The incident occurred late on Saturday when gunmen burst into the heavily guarded hotel, located atop a hill in the west of the Afghan capital.

"The attack has ended completely after all the assailants were eliminated," the spokesperson said.

Rahimi added that six civilians died and another seven were wounded in the attack on the hotel where police and investigators arrived on Sunday morning to clear the area of explosives.

Security forces rescued 151 guests, including 41 foreigners, and hotel staff, the Interior Ministry told the media, adding that one foreigner was among the dead, without specifying the victim's nationality.

"All hotel rooms have been cleared and searched one by one. The hotel is completely cleared and the operation has ended. None of the terrorists remain (alive) in the hotel," an official said.

The hotel, which was the target of a similar attack in June 2011 that left 21 dead including nine attackers, caters to wealthy Afghans and foreigners, and often hosts private parties and official events such as press briefings, seminars and conferences.

Earlier this month, 11 people, including five policemen, were killed and 25 were wounded after a suicide bomber detonated explosives near security forces guarding a demonstration in Kabul.

The attack comes just days after the US embassy in Kabul issued a warning about hotels in the city.

"We are aware of reports that extremist groups may be planning an attack against hotels in Kabul," the embassy said in an alert published on Thursday though it highlighted another hotel near the international airport as a possible target.

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