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Nine Killed, Dozens Wounded as Contractors, Police Attack Afghan Protesters

By Jason Ditz

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At least [nine people have been confirmed killed](#) today and dozens of others wounded as protests against US military officials' burning of Qurans entered their second day. Thousands turned out at some of the biggest protests, [while police and NATO contractors opened fire with live ammunition against demonstrators in several provinces.](#)

Six of the nine people killed were demonstrating in Parwan Province, [the site of the burnings](#), and the US has put its embassy in Kabul on "lockdown" facing major protests after contractors killed a protester at a Kabul base.

Afghan police defended the use of violence against demonstrators, saying that they have a "right" to protest but [only in the context of existing laws.](#) Afghan President Hamid Karzai has warned demonstrators to tone down the rhetoric.

US military commander Gen. John Allen confirmed the burning of the Qurans, but apologized, saying that they wouldn't include Qurans in future book burnings. [Military officials say the Qurans were among a large number of library books singled out for destruction](#) as "extremist" in nature.