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Angry Afghans clash with police over Qur'an desecration

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Angry Afghan protesters have clashed with law enforcement in the capital Kabul as anti-American rallies continue across the country in protest to the desecration of the Holy Qur'an at a US military base.

A few hundred protesters took to the streets and chanted slogans against the United States and Afghan President Hamid Karzai in the Pul-e-Mohammad Khan area of Kabul after the Friday

Prayers.

“Hundreds of riot police and Afghan army have been deployed in the area. Some security forces have fired gunshots in the air to disperse the crowd,” an eyewitness said on condition of anonymity.

There are reports that one demonstrator has been shot in the hip.

Other protests broke out in the northern provinces of Baghlan and Kunduz, as well in central provinces of Bamiyan and Ghazni and in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

At least 20 people have been killed across Afghanistan as anti-US rallies continue in the war-battered Asian country over the burning of the copies of the Holy Qur’an and other Islamic reading material at the US-run Bagram Airbase, located 11 kilometers (7 miles) southeast of the city of Charikar in Afghanistan's Parwan Province.

Afghanistan wants NATO to put on public trial those who desecrated the Holy Qur’an at Bagram Airbase.

“NATO officials, in response to a request for the trial and punishment of the perpetrators ... promised this crime will brought to court as soon as possible,” a statement released by the Afghan presidential office on Thursday read.

President Karzai had earlier accused a US officer of "ignorantly" burning copies of Holy Qur’an.

Meanwhile, US President Barack Obama has sent a letter to his Afghan counterpart Karzai, apologizing for the burning of copies of the Holy Qur’an by American forces in Afghanistan.

Obama told Karzai that the incident, which has sparked angry protests against US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, was not intentional.