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<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/21/kabul-mosque-hit-by-deadly-suicide-bomb-attack>

Isis claims responsibility for Kabul mosque suicide bomb blast

Monday 21 November

Dozens killed and more than 80 injured in attack on mosque in Afghan capital in latest attack targeting Shia community.

Afghan security forces keep watch in front of the mosque in Kabul after the bomb attack.
Photograph: Omar Sobhani/Reuters

Islamic State has claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a crowded mosque in Kabul that killed more than 30 people and wounded dozens in its third major attack on minority Shias in the Afghan capital since July.

More than 80 people were injured, according to Ismail Kawoosi, a spokesman for Afghanistan's ministry of public health. The number of dead, which included at least one child, was expected to rise.

The attack, on Monday afternoon, targeted the Baqir ul-Uloom mosque in the Darulaman area. It took place towards the end of a prayer ceremony marking Arbaeen, a religious observance on the 40th day of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, perceived by Shias to be the rightful heir to the prophet Muhammad.

Jamil Yawari, 22, who was injured in the blast and woke up in hospital after being flung into a wall by the explosion, said the mosque was crowded at the time of the attack. “In my line, I sat next to three or four children,” he said.

Afghan municipality workers sweep Baqir-ul Ulom mosque after the suicide bomb attack.
Photograph: Rahmat Gul/AP

Images circulating on social media, purportedly from the scene, showed numerous dusty and bloodied bodies spread across the mosque floor.

A statement in Arabic from Isis’s Amaq news agency said one of its fighters had targeted the mosque.

It is the third time in as many months that Kabul’s Shias have been targeted in a large-scale attack. In October, a gunman attacked another Shia mosque in Kabul where mourners had gathered to mark Ashura, Imam Hussein’s death day.

Affiliates of Isis claimed culpability for that attack, in which at least 14 people died, and for an attack in July, which killed at least 80 protesters who were mainly Hazaras, a Shia minority.

While Afghanistan has traditionally avoided sectarian conflict on a level that plagues other countries in the region, the recent emergence of fighters loyal to Isis, a Sunni group, has coincided with a recent spate of terrorist attacks against Shias.

The Afghan president, Ashraf Ghani, condemned the attack, which he called “a great crime and the work of the enemies of the people of Afghanistan”.

The president “considers attacks on sacred and religious sites to be clear enmity with Islam and the people of Afghanistan as well as an attempt to sow seeds of discord”, a statement said.