

Beat: Miscellaneous

Afghan police detain 10-year-old would-be suicide bomber

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USPA News - A 10-year-old girl wearing a suicide vest was detained in southern Afghanistan after being instructed to carry out a suicide bombing on border police, local authorities said Monday. Her brother is believed to be a Taliban commander.

The incident happened late on Sunday evening after the girl had been instructed to cross the Helmand River in Khanashin district of Helmand province, located in Afghanistan's volatile southern region that was the birthplace of the Taliban movement two decades ago. The area is about 160 kilometers (99 miles) from the provincial capital Lashkar Gah. "My brother, who serves as a Taliban commander, asked me to wear my dress and then the suicide jacket," the young girl was quoted as saying by Afghan news channel TOLONews. "After that he left me outside, I was there for several minutes and was shivering from cold." The girl began to cry as she attempted to cross the cold river, after which nearby officers found her with the suicide vest and took her into custody. An Afghan border police official said the girl had been instructed by her brother to attack border police officers after she was accused by relatives of having "inappropriate contact" with police. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the allegations that a Taliban commander had instructed the girl to carry out a suicide attack. No arrests had been made by late Monday evening, but authorities said the girl's brother is believed to have fled the area. The Taliban have been accused of using child suicide bombers in the past, although the militant group has repeatedly denied that they either use or target children as part of their operations. However, children often become victims in attacks carried out by the Taliban, and would-be child suicide bombers have repeatedly been detained. A suicide bombing that injured five people in southern Uruzgan province in March 2012 was also carried out by a child, although his exact age was not released. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack without saying whether the person responsible was a child, but it came soon after two would-be child suicide bombers were detained in the Mirabad district of Helmand province. And in July 2011, an 8-year-old Afghan boy was seriously injured when he was told by a suspected Taliban insurgent to step on an improvised explosive device (IED) in the Zhari District of Kandahar province. The boy was forced to have an amputation of the right leg below the knee and suffered a femur fracture. The incident came just days after suspected members of the Taliban kidnapped an 8-year-old boy in the Greshk district of Helmand province. He was later hanged after his father, a local police commander, did not surrender as the Taliban had demanded.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1737/afghan-police-detain-10-year-old-would-be-suicide-bomber.html>

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