

57 killed in Kabul suicide blast

Attack shows growing concerns over security in lead-up to elections

Health ministry spokesman said 57 people were killed, 119 injured

Legislative elections in Afghanistan are scheduled for October 20

Kabul

An Islamic State suicide bomber killed at least 57 people including women and children and wounded 119 outside a voter registration centre in the Afghan capital Kabul on Sunday in the latest attack on election preparations.

The assaults underscore growing concerns about security in the lead-up to legislative elections scheduled for October 20, which are seen as a test-run for next year's presidential poll.

There were anguished and angry scenes at Isteqlal Hospital where many of the victims were taken, with relatives criticising the government for failing to protect their loved ones.

"Our patience is running out. This government should



An Afghan security force member stands guard at the site of the bomb blast in Kabul

take responsibility for the lives of all these innocent people lost every day," a man called Hussain, whose cousin was wounded in the blast, told AFP.

"Nobody will go to vote anymore."

The health ministry gave the latest toll for the attack, which was claimed by the Islamic State group via its propaganda arm *Amaq*.

The interior ministry had earlier said 48 people were killed and 112 wounded. Its spokesman was not

immediately available to comment on the new toll.

"They are civilians, including women and children," interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said earlier.

The centre in a heavily Shiite-populated neighbourhood in the west of the city was also being used by people to register for national identification certificates, which they need in order to sign up to vote.

"I found myself covered in blood, with dead people -- women and children -- around

me," said Ali Rasuli, who had been standing in a queue outside the centre when he saw a "fireball" in front of him. He was taken to hospital with leg and abdominal wounds.

Sheets of paper and passport-sized photos lay scattered amid shattered glass and pools of blood on the street near badly damaged cars -- grim evidence of the force of the blast.

"This senseless violence shows the cowardice and inhumanity of the enemies of democracy and peace in

Bahrain condemns Kabul terrorist blast

Manama

Bahrain strongly condemned the terrorist bombing Kabul, Afghanistan.

The Foreign Ministry extended sincere condolences to the families of the victims, wishing speedy recovery to all those injured as a result of this terrorist act.

It affirmed Bahrain's support to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in its actions to counter terrorism

and to establish security and stability throughout Afghanistan.

In a statement yesterday, it reiterated the Kingdom's rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations regardless of its motives and justifications, urging international concerted efforts to eradicate this dangerous scourge that threatens world peace and security.

Afghanistan," US ambassador John Bass wrote on Twitter. NATO and the United Nations also condemned the bombing.

The last major attack in Kabul was on March 21 when an IS suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd celebrating the Persian New Year holiday and killed at least 33 people.

Ariana TV showed angry crowds shouting "Death to the government!" and "Death to the Taliban!"

A wounded man in a

hospital bed wept as he told the network: "I don't know where my daughters are. God damn the attackers!"

A witness to the attack named Akbar told *Tolo TV*: "Now we know the government cannot provide us security: we have to get armed and protect ourselves."

Elsewhere, a roadside explosion in the northern province of Baghlan yesterday killed six people, including three women and two children. (AFP)

Family accuses Mossad of killing Palestinian in Malaysia



Pedestrians walk past a bullet-riddled wall at the scene where Palestinian scientist Fadi Mohammad al-Batsh was gunned down

Gombak, Malaysia

An autopsy was being carried out yesterday on the body of a Palestinian professor who was gunned down in what his family claim was an assassination by Israel's Mossad spy agency. Fadi Mohammad al-Batsh, 35, was killed in a drive-by shooting on Saturday, according to Malaysian authorities.

He was walking from his highrise apartment to dawn prayers at a local mosque in the Kuala Lumpur suburb of Gombak when he was shot by two gunmen riding a motorcycle, officials added. At the crime scene, police markers indicated 14 bullets had been sprayed at the victim, some of them hitting a wall. An iron grill hit by a bullet was

dented. Malaysian Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, was quoted by the state-run Bernama news agency as saying Batsh was "an electrical engineer and an expert at making rockets". Kuala Lumpur police chief Mazlan Lazim said the investigation was ongoing. (AFP)



REMINDER TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF GULF HOTELS GROUP B.S.C. FOR COLLECTING THEIR DIVIDEND CHEQUES

The Board of Directors of Gulf Hotels Group B.S.C. "GHG" is pleased to request its shareholders for approaching GHG's Registrar Karvy Computershare W.L.L. at the address shown below to receive their previous years' uncollected dividends. Kindly ignore this notification in case the dividends are already received / collected.

Karvy Computershare W.L.L. (Registrar)
Office No.74, 7th Floor, Al-Zamil Tower
Building 31, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain
Tel: +973 17215080; Fax: +973 17212055
Email: Bahrain.helpdesk@karvy.com

Requirements to receive the dividends:

Shareholders based in Bahrain:

- In case a shareholder is collecting the dividends in person, he / she should present a copy of his/her valid ID or passport.
- In case an authorized person is collecting the dividends, copies of the ID or the passport of both the shareholder and the authorized person along with the authorization letter should be presented.
- In case the shares are held in certificate (physical) form, original share certificate should be presented and if the shares are held in electronic (CDS) form with Bahrain Clear then a latest statement of account issued by the Bahrain Clear should be presented.

Shareholders based in all other locations:

- Shareholders in all other locations are requested to contact the Registrar with their postal address. Following which, dividend cheques will be sent by Registered Post to their addresses.

For further information, please contact our Registrar Karvy Computershare W.L.L. at the address mentioned above.