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Taliban Storm Key Afghan Prison, Freeing 355 Inmates

By Jason Ditz
September 14, 2015

A group of Taliban fighters stormed the front gates of the Ghazni Prison today, blowing up a car bomb and fighting their way in, killing four police before managing to free some 355 inmates from the facility. The Interior Ministry reports that most of the escapees were “Taliban or other militants.”

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed that three of the six Taliban fighters involved in the prison raid were killed during the operation, including one who blew himself up to force open the prison gates, allowing the mass escape.

This is the third reported Taliban prison escape in Afghanistan since 2008 involving more than 100 escapees. Of the 355 who escaped, the local officials say only three were located and recaptured, with the vast majority likely to reinforce the local Taliban significantly.

The move is seen as an effort by the Taliban to boost morale among their fighters, which has been in question amid the leadership dispute in the wake of the confirmation of Mullah Omar's death. This is the largest escape since 2011, when the Taliban freed 470 through a tunnel at Kandahar Prison.