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Al Jazeera

## Deadly blast at Kabul hotel

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At least three people have been killed after a suicide bomber targeted a hotel and shopping complex in the Afghan capital Kabul.

The Taliban movement claimed responsibility for the attack on Monday, in which several people were also injured.

Al Jazeera's Zeina Khodr, reporting from Kabul, said armed men may still be inside the mall.

"It is a very fluid and rapidly developing situation, and many here are afraid," she said.

Colonel Baloch Orikhil, the director of criminal investigation for the Kabul police, told the Associated Press that initial reports indicate that a suicide bomber detonated a cache of explosives inside the building known as the Safi Landmark.

"We have reports that there was a suicide attack - one person blew himself up - and other insurgents went into the building," he said.

### Heavy damage

Following the blast, the hotel was surrounded by hundreds of Afghan security forces. The blast destroyed the guarded entrance to the building and blew out windows.

Government officials, businessmen and foreigners regularly hold meetings at the Safi Landmark.

The building was heavily damaged a year ago when suicide attackers struck two residential hotels nearby, killing at least 20 people.

After that attack, shops at the centre, which sell jewellery, electronics and clothing, were closed for months.

It is the first bombing in the capital since January 28 when a suicide attacker blew himself up at a supermarket in Kabul, killing at least eight people.