

Cheney undaunted as possible target of suicide bomber

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

At least nine people were killed and 21 injured in a suicide bomb attack today a distance away from the United States military base in Bagram, Afghanistan where Vice President Dick Cheney was staying. His overnight stay at the base was unplanned, but made necessary by inclement weather on his way to meet with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul.

A Taliban spokesman reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack. "We wanted to target Cheney," Mullah Hayat Khan was quoted by media.

Vice President Dick Cheney

In the capital, White House spokesman Tony Snow said it was not clear how the suicide bomber had been able to get close to the base. "At this point, people are still investigating what happened, so we don't have a firm answer for you," he said.

Cheney, in a conversation with the traveling press aboard Air Force Two, said "It seems to me I think it was about 10 a.m. this morning I heard a loud boom. And shortly after that, the Secret Service came in and told me there had been an attack on the main gate, apparently a suicide bomber."

"They moved me for a relatively brief period of time to one of the bomb shelters nearby, near the quarters I was staying in. And as the situation settled down, and they got a better sense in terms of what was going on, then I went back to my room."

The Vice President said changing his itinerary following the attack was "never an option." Explaining further, he added, "I think they clearly try to find ways to question the authority of the central government. Striking at Bagram with a suicide bomber, I suppose, is one way to do that. But it shouldn't affect our behavior at all."

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