

Explosion outside Kabul airport

U.S. officials say an explosion has occurred outside Kabul's airport, after Western nations had warned of a possible attack there from the so-called Islamic State group's affiliate in Afghanistan



Picture: IS propaganda image

ISLAMIC STATE KHORASAN (ISIS-K)

■ **Origin:** Formed by disaffected fighters from Pakistani Taliban, following creation in 2014 of caliphate in Iraq and Syria by so-called *Islamic State* group

■ **Strength:** Around **1,500-2,000** fighters in Nuristan, Kunar and Nangarhar provinces, with cells across country, including Kabul

■ **Taliban relations:** ISIS-K criticises Taliban's version of Islamic rule as insufficiently hard line, and denounces their deal with U.S. over troop withdrawals

■ **Leadership:** Headed since Jun 2020 by **Shahab al-Muhajir**. ISIS-K founding emir, **Hafiz Saeed Khan** (above), was killed in U.S. airstrike in 2016

■ **Attacks:** ISIS-K was responsible for 77 attacks in Afghanistan in first four months of this year – up from 21 in same period in 2020, according to UN. **School bombing in Kabul in May 2021, killed 80 schoolgirls**

● **ISIS-K attacks**
(Jan 2017-
Oct 2018)

