

28 Nov 2007

[Dressed to Kill: Around the Globe](#)

By Annie Jacobsen in category [The Al-Qaeda Threat](#)

Female suicide bombers — considered by the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Intelligence as a [U.S. aviation threat](#) — are on the rise around the globe. Today, the U.S. military announced another incident involving a female bomber in Iraq. From [Reuters](#):

A female suicide bomber wearing an explosives blew herself up in a city north of Baghdad, wounding seven U.S. soldiers and five Iraqi civilians, the U.S. military said on Wednesday.

And in Sri Lanka this morning, a female suicide bomber detonated herself at a government ministry in an assassination attempt. From the [Associated Press](#):

On Wednesday morning, a suicide bomber blew herself up at Sri Lanka's social services ministry in the heart of Colombo in an unsuccessful attempt to kill the agency's minister, Douglas Devananda, who heads an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the rebels, the military said.

On the subject of disguises and ruses that suicide bombers will use, nine Iraqi police were killed yesterday when a suicide bomber posing as a shepherd (complete with sheep) attacked a police checkpoint in Baquba. From [Reuters](#):

Police at the Diyala province headquarters in Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, said they were taken by surprise when the suicide bomber herded several sheep towards a checkpoint before detonating a belt packed with explosives.

"There was nothing suspicious about him because it's an open, agricultural area and it's normal for shepherds to be around here," Diyala police lieutenant Ali Jassim told Reuters.

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Monday
26 Nov 2007

[Dressed to Kill: Here Comes the Bride](#)

By Annie Jacobsen in category [U.S. Homeland Security](#)



The Iraqi Defense Ministry released today this photograph of wanted terror suspects Abbas al-Dobbi (groom) and Haider al-Bahadli ("bride"). The two men were caught at a military checkpoint 12 miles north of Baghdad — posing as newlyweds.

What does this have to do with aviation security? As I

reported in October, more than your average cross-dresser might think.

Female suicide bombers "[Dressed to Kill](#)" have become a growing concern for the Department of Homeland Security. According to Office of Intelligence documents I have viewed, Federal Air Marshals are currently undergoing training so as to be on the lookout for female suicide bombers in U.S. airports. Why? "Most importantly," states the Federal Air Marshal Service Office of Intelligence document, "females have the element of surprise."

And now, in a developing terror-trend, male suicide bombers are disguising themselves as women. On October 1st, a male suicide bomber, [dressed as a woman](#) in a burqa, [blew himself up](#) at a checkpoint in Pakistan killing sixteen and wounding twenty-nine.

A blushing bride unwilling to lift her veil poses a surprising new security challenge for those on the front lines in the war against the terrorists. This photograph — that face, framed in that lace — makes it seem funny. Until the next batch of law enforcers are blown to bits.

Mohammed Tawfeeq reports for [CNN](#).

The soldiers became suspicious of the convoy because its members — save the "bride" — were all male and because one of the cars in the convoy did not heed orders to stop, the official said.

Also, soldiers said, the people in the car seemed nervous and the groom refused to lift his bride's veil when soldiers asked him to, according to the official.

Soldiers ordered everyone out of the car, the official said.

Upon inspecting the convoy, soldiers found a stubbly-faced man, Haider al-Bahadli, decked out in a white bride's dress and veil.

Bahadli was wanted on terror-related charges, as was his groom, Abbas al-Dobbi, the official said.

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Tuesday
23 Oct 2007

[Dressed to Kill in Dagestan](#)

By Annie Jacobsen in category [The Al-Qaeda Threat](#)



A female suicide bomber blew herself up today, in the Russian Republic of Dagestan, on approach to a police road block in the Kazbek district. The area neighbors Chechnya, home to Chechen female suicide bombers known as Black Widows.

Dagestan might seem a million miles away from U.S. aviation interests — Dagestan transliterates to 'land of mountains' — but as [I have previously written](#), and in my analysis, female suicide bombers are among the top-tier threats to U.S. aviation security. News of this Dagestanian female suicide bomber begs a few questions:

- Have terrorist training camps been set up in Dagestan?
- Who is training these female suicide bombers?
- Are these *femmes fatales* heading west?

[Deutsche Presse-Agentur](#) has more of the story:

Moscow - Five people were injured Tuesday when a suicide bomber blew up a mini-bus in Dagestan, Interfax news agency quoted the republic's Interior Ministry spokesman Mark Tochinsky as saying.

The explosive was rigged to a woman's belt and killed her immediately after she triggered it, officials said.

The blast occurred around 100 metres from a police road block in Dagestan's Kazbek district, where attacks have surpassed those in neighbouring Chechnya in recent months.

The suicide attack in Dagestan today occurred on the fifth anniversary of the Dubrovka Theater Siege in Moscow when 850 people were taken hostage by 40 Islamic suicide bombers; 129 theater-goers died and 644 were injured. The siege was hailed Russia's 9/11 and involved 19 female suicide bombers.

(photograph: The village of [Tindi](#), in Dagestan, in the late 1890s. The photograph was taken by M. de Déchy)

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Monday
1 Oct 2007

[Dressed to Kill: Why Air Marshals Are Concerned](#)

By Annie Jacobsen in category [Federal Air Marshals](#)

A male suicide bomber, [dressed as a woman](#) and wearing a burqa, [blew himself up](#) at a police checkpoint in northern Pakistan today, killing sixteen people and wounding twenty-nine. [From Agence France-Presse:](#)

"A man disguised in a burqa got out of an autorickshaw when police stopped the vehicle for a search at a checkpoint. He then blew himself up," police officer Asar Islam told AFP.

What do male suicide bombers disguised as women have to do with airport terrorism? According to Department of Homeland Security documents I viewed, more than you may think. Federal Air Marshals are currently undergoing training so as to be on the lookout for female suicide bombers in U.S. airports. "Most importantly," states the Federal Air Marshal Service Office of Intelligence document, "females

have the element of surprise."

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Wednesday

12 Sep 2007

Dressed to Kill: Al Qaeda Announces Female Suicide Bomber Unit

By Annie Jacobsen in category [The Al-Qaeda Threat](#)

[Quds Press](#), the London-based Arab news agency, reports that Al Qaeda in Iraq has created a 'brigade' of all-female suicide bombers. According to pamphlets found in Sunni mosques in Baghdad, the unit consists of mothers, wives and daughters of local martyrs. The group calls themselves Al Khansa, after a 7th Century poetess and, according to the pamphlets, is planning its first suicide attacks during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. [Adnkronos International](#) has the details.

The militant group announced the unit's creation through pamphlets distributed in several Sunni Muslim mosques and neighbourhoods of Baghdad, Quds Press reported.

"Verily a group of faithful women, consisting of mothers, wives and daughters of martyrs who were members of the Islamic State of Iraq, have formed the suicide bomber brigade al-Khansa" the message contained in the pamphlets said.

The brigade - whose name derives from a 7th Century AD Arab poetess and collaborator of the Prophet Mohammed - will launch its first suicide attack during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the pamphlets said.

The pamphlet ends with an appeal for other women to join the brigade and to sacrifice themselves as suicide bombers.

Female jihadists pose a stark threat to aviation security, as I have written [here](#).

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Monday

27 Aug 2007

Dressed To Kill (2)

By Annie Jacobsen in category [The Al-Qaeda Threat](#)

As an ever-increasing number of readers contact me with airline vignettes — ones where they report suspicions that fellow passengers in various states of traditional Muslim female dress (veil, hijab, niqab, burqa etc.) may not, in fact, be the gentler, fairer sex behind those veils after all (big feet, big hands, unfeminine gait etc.), I have begun filing reports of jihadists around the globe posing as women under the

banner, ["Dressed To Kill."](#) Here's one that [IRNA](#), Iran's state-run news agency, ran today:

A Russian and two Afghani men have been arrested by police in southeast Afghanistan on terrorism charges. Their car was loaded with 1,100 pounds of explosives. All three men were dressed as women — disguised in traditional Muslim dress and full face veil known as Hijab.

TEHRAN, August 27 (RIA Novosti) - A Russian found transporting explosives was detained in southeast Afghanistan near the Pakistani border on suspicion of preparing a terrorist attack, according to the official news agency of neighboring Iran, IRNA.

The agency said police in Afghanistan's Paktia province arrested three men - a Russian and two Afghans - **all disguised in Hijab, Islamic women's clothing**. Officers searched their car, and found about 500 kg of explosives.

The Russian said he entered Afghanistan through the border with Pakistan, where he had traveled via Egypt, Turkey and Iran, and planned to return to Russia through Tajikistan.

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May 2009

S M T W T F S

1 2

3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29 30

31

[« Apr](#)

- **Event Archives**

[Monarch Air: Flight 4502](#)

[Air West: Flight 612](#)

[American: Flight 63](#)

[Indian Air: Flight 814](#)

[Inspector General](#)

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- [April 2009](#)
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- [February 2009](#)
- [January 2009](#)
- [December 2008](#)
- [November 2008](#)
- [October 2008](#)
- [September 2008](#)
- [August 2008](#)
- [July 2008](#)
- [June 2008](#)
- [May 2008](#)
- [April 2008](#)
- [March 2008](#)
- [February 2008](#)
- [January 2008](#)
- [December 2007](#)
- [November 2007](#)
- [October 2007](#)
- [September 2007](#)
- [August 2007](#)
- [July 2007](#)
- [June 2007](#)
- [May 2007](#)
- [April 2007](#)
- [March 2007](#)
- [February 2007](#)
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