

At least three people killed amid chaos at Kabul airport as U.S. troops fire in air

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?Kabul airport is closed for commercial flights until further notice??

Kabul, August 16 (RHC)-- At least three people were shot and killed near the passenger terminal of the Kabul airport early Monday morning. Graphic footage posted to social media appears to show three bodies lying on the ground just outside the building. It's unclear what led to the deaths, but according to reports, at least some of the shooting that occurred at the airport was done by US soldiers as a form of

“crowd control.”

A U.S. official told Reuters that American troops tasked with securing the airport fired in the air on Monday morning to dissuade hundreds of panicked Afghans from congregating near the runway. “The crowd was out of control,” the official said, adding that “the firing was only done to defuse the chaos.”

The US troops were dispatched to the airport to help with the evacuation of diplomatic staff and foreign citizens based in the Afghan capital. But even foreign nationals are reportedly having trouble fleeing Kabul, which was captured by the Taliban on Sunday.

Stephen Dziedzic, a reporter for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, said that he spoke with two Australians currently at the airport. “One says the U.S. military has struggled to maintain order – there’s the sound of gunfire, but [the] source [is] unclear. He says he’s constantly trying to contact the Australian government but he’s got no response,” the journalist wrote. He said that it was possible that US troops were responsible for the gunfire but he couldn’t confirm this.

The ongoing chaos follows a night of turmoil in the city, as civilians began to pour into the airport in hope of securing a flight out of the country. Footage posted to social media late on Sunday evening showed people rushing into the airport as gunshots rang out – apparently fired by airport security to stop the stampede.

Media outlets citing senior US military officials later reported that commercial flights had been suspended at the airport due to the gunfire. Thousands of Afghans attempting to flee the capital led to huge traffic jams on Sunday, as well as stories from journalists and foreign nationals about their frenzied efforts to get out of the city.

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