Hundreds of Afghan Schoolgirls Suffer Gas Poisoning

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<http://www.voanews.com/content/afghanistan-girls-school-gas-poisoning/2943538.html?utm_content=buffera6669&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer>

Hundreds of schoolgirls were taken to a hospital after breathing in poisonous gas in Herat Thursday. This is a third incident of gas poisoning this week. Officials suspect foul play.

For the third time this week, hundreds of parents in Afghanistan’s Herat province sat in a hospital waiting for their daughters to get better.

Officials say the three incidents were suspiciously similar. They now think the gas leaks at the three girls' schools may have been deliberate.

The head of education of Herat province, Abdul Razaq Ahmadi, told VOA, that the perpetrators were enemies of education and growth. He suggested a big conspiracy, saying that people needed to pay attention to the enemy's intentions.

Ultra-conservative elements in Afghanistan are against educating girls. During the Taliban regime in late 90s, females were barred from education and jobs. Girls’ schools have sporadically come under attack in Afghanistan.

The latest incidents come on the heels of a public flogging of a man and a woman for adultery in another province. Human rights group Amnesty International has asked the government to crack down on cruel and unlawful punishments - often handed down by the country’s informal justice system.