

Boko Haram favours women, children as suicide bombers: Study

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Washington: A study conducted by Researchers at the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point and Yale has revealed that the majority of suicide bombers used by the Nigeria-based terror group Boko Haram are women and children.

File pic - Boko Haram favours women, children as suicide bombers Study

Out of 434 suicide bombings carried out by Boko Haram since 2011, that were analysed, it was found that at least 244 of the 338 attacks in which the bomber's gender could be identified were carried out by women. The Islamic State-affiliated insurgent group has sent 80 women to their deaths in 2017 alone.

Boko Haram's use of women as bombers increased following the abduction of 276 female students aged between 16 and 18 from their school dormitories in Chibok in April 2014, according to the study.

"Almost immediately after the Chibok kidnappings ... Boko Haram's use of women suicide bombers skyrocketed," said Jason Warner, assistant professor at the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, the US' elite military academy.

Of the 134 suicide bombers whose age could be determined, 60 per cent were teenagers or children. The youngest suicide bomber identified to date was just seven years old.

Ellen Chapin, a Yale-based researcher who worked on the report, told CNN the militant group "deployed 42 teenage girls and 23 little girls (12 years old and under), compared to 11 teenage boys and five little boys". The group's reign of terror has left an estimated 35,000 dead over the last six years.

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