

# Many Afghans flee the country after Taliban takeover

The U.S. and other countries airlifted more than 122,000 people out of Kabul.

## BASIC

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, a military group known as the Taliban took over the city of Kabul. **Based on the map, where is Kabul?** (*Afghanistan.*) The Taliban had been fighting U.S. and Afghan forces for the last 20 years. The group had already taken control of the rest of Afghanistan after the U.S. said it would leave Afghanistan by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Many Afghan people were scared after the Taliban took over Kabul, the capital city, so they tried to leave the country. Afghans rushed to the Kabul airport, which was the only way to leave. As of last week, the U.S. and other countries had helped nearly 120,000 Afghans escape the country. Those people will all be resettled in other

## GENERAL

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, an Afghan military group called the Taliban overtook Afghanistan's capital city. **What is the capital of Afghanistan?** (*Kabul.*) The Taliban is an extremist group that previously controlled Afghanistan before the U.S. invaded in 2001. The group has been fighting U.S. and Afghan forces since that time. After the U.S. announced it was pulling its troops out of Afghanistan by August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Taliban took control of many parts of the country. Once the Taliban entered Kabul, many Afghans rushed to the city's airport to try to flee the country. Sadly, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, terrorists attacked the airport with bombs. They killed more than 150 Afghan people, as well as 13 U.S. military members.

Despite the terrible tragedy, the U.S. and other countries airlifted more than

## ADVANCED

After 20 years of fighting in Afghanistan, the U.S. announced it would withdraw its troops by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. After the withdrawal began, Taliban forces took control of cities across Afghanistan, finally reaching the capital, Kabul, on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Taliban overtook Kabul quickly, leaving thousands of Afghans and Americans scrambling to evacuate. For people trying to flee, the only route out was Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport. The scene at the airport became chaotic with thousands of Afghan men, women, and children desperately trying to get on a plane out of the country. **What do you see in the photo here?** Tragically, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, terrorists attacked one of the gates at the Kabul airport, killing 170 people, including 13 U.S. military members. **Do you think**

countries. People that are forced to leave their home countries because of wars are called refugees. Many

of the refugees that escaped Afghanistan were people that helped the U.S. during the war there. But sadly, many more people who wanted to leave were left behind. The U.S. and other countries are still working to help people escape Kabul. **Can someone read the quote here? What should be done to help people still trying to escape?** NEXT

122,000 people from Kabul's airport between August 14<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup>. **What do you see in the photo here?** Many of the Afghans evacuated were people that had helped the U.S. during the war. **Why do you think they were afraid to stay?** The U.S. officially left Afghanistan on August 30<sup>th</sup>, but there are still many Afghans that helped the U.S. who were left behind. **Can someone read the quote here?** The U.S., as well as other countries and groups, are still working to help these Afghans leave. All of the Afghans who did leave the country are now refugees. **What is a refugee?** (*A person forced to leave their country because of war, persecution, or natural disasters.*) These refugees will all be settled in different countries around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. NEXT

**the U.S. government could have done more to avoid this chaos and tragedy?**

Between August 14<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. and other countries helped 122,000 people, including 5,000 Americans, evacuate from Afghanistan. Many of the Afghans were people who had worked for the U.S. during the war. Sadly, thousands of Afghans who aided the U.S. were not evacuated by the August 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. **Can someone read the quote here?** However, the U.S. and many other countries are still working to help more Afghans escape the country. The Afghans who were evacuated are now refugees who will be resettled in many different countries around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. **Does the U.S. have a responsibility to help the Afghans who actively helped us during our 20 years in the country?** NEXT



# Instagrammer raises millions for Afghan refugees

Tommy Marcus raised more than \$6 million in less than two days.

**BASIC** The man shown here is 26-year-old Tommy Marcus. Marcus runs a popular Instagram page where he has more than 800,000 followers. Marcus normally uses the page to share funny memes and videos. **Does anyone know what a meme is?** (*An image or video that gets changed and shared around the internet.*) In August, Marcus followed the news stories about Afghans trying to escape the country. He saw that many people trying to escape were being left behind. Marcus decided he wanted to use his Instagram page to help people in

Afghanistan. He created an online fundraiser and asked his followers for donations. The response was overwhelming. Marcus raised over \$6 million in less than two days. Marcus said all the money will go toward rescuing Afghan people trying to escape the country. **Can someone read the quote here? Why do you think Marcus was able to raise so much for this cause?** END



**GENERAL** Twenty-six-year-old Tommy Marcus runs a popular Instagram page under the name "Quentin Quarantino." Marcus has gained a following of more than 800,000 by sharing memes and political content. **What is a meme?** (*A funny image or video that is copied and quickly spread across the internet.*) After the U.S. withdrew its military from Afghanistan, Marcus followed the news coverage of Afghan people trying to escape the country. He saw many people in need and decided to use his platform to help Afghan refugees.

where refugees would be picked up and taken to other countries. Marcus raised over \$6 million in less than two days, making his fundraiser one of the most successful GoFundMe campaigns of all time. **Can someone read the quote on the screen? Why do you think Americans feel so strongly about this cause?**

Marcus didn't have experience planning emergency flights in other countries, so he turned to experts for help. Marcus worked with several non-profit groups and former military members to plan evacuation flights. He says that any money that didn't go to evacuation flights will be donated to other charities that help refugees. **Have you been following the news in Afghanistan? What else should the international community do to help people there?** END

**ADVANCED** Tommy Marcus is a 26-year-old with a popular Instagram page. Going by the name "Quentin Quarantino," Marcus posts memes and videos about politics and life during the COVID-19 pandemic. **What is a meme?** (*A funny image or video that is copied, sometimes changed, and spread across the internet.*) Recently, after witnessing the chaotic aftermath of the U.S leaving Afghanistan, Marcus decided he wanted to use his platform to help people. Many Afghan people were attempting to flee their homes before the Taliban took total control of the country. Marcus created a GoFundMe page and shared it with his more than 800,000 followers. GoFundMe is a website where users can raise money for charitable causes. Marcus originally set a goal of \$550,000. He planned to use this money

to help send two or three flights to Kabul to get Afghan refugees out of the country.

Marcus's fundraiser was met with overwhelming support. He was able to raise more than \$6 million in less than two days, making his campaign one of the largest in GoFundMe history. **Can someone read the quote here? Why do you think so many Americans are invested in this cause?** Marcus didn't have experience planning evacuation flights in other countries, so he enlisted several non-profit groups and former military members to help him. Marcus says that any money that didn't go to emergency flights will be donated to the International Women's Media Foundation, a nonprofit group that will help refugees settle in other countries. **Do you use social media? Are there ways you could use those platforms to help people? If so, how?** END