

The Taliban are showing us the dangers of personal data falling into the wrong hands | The Guardian

By Emerys Schoemaker

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The Taliban have openly talked about using US-made digital identity technology to hunt down Afghans who have worked with the international coalition – posing a huge threat to everyone recorded in the system. In addition, the extremists now also have access to – and control over – the digital identification systems and technologies built through international aid support.

These include the e-Tazkira, a biometric identity card used by Afghanistan's National Statistics and Information Authority, which includes fingerprints, iris scans and a photograph, as well as voter registration databases. It also includes the Afghan personnel and pay system, used by the interior and defence ministries to pay the army and police.

For Afghans, and for the wider community working on digital identification for development, this means that the Taliban have sensitive personal information that they have said will be used to target those they consider enemies or threats. While some Afghans are frantically trying to erase any trace of digital activity, on official databases, user deletion is not an option.

[...]

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