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Bombing kills 23 in Pakistan's Rawalpindi

11/22/2012



Pakistani police say the death toll from a bomb attack on Shia Muslims in the city of Rawalpindi reached 23 with over 60 others wounded.

The attack targeted a Shia procession commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBUH) in the Dhoke Syedan area of the city on Wednesday night. Eight children were also among the wounded.

The Pakistani Taliban has claimed responsibility for the bombing.

The militant group also claimed responsibility for another explosion on the same day that killed two people near a Shia mosque in the port city of Karachi.

“We carried out the attacks (on Wednesday) in Rawalpindi and Karachi,” said a Taliban spokesperson.

Pakistan’s pro-Taliban militants have been engaged in a violent campaign against Shia Muslims over the past years.

According to local sources, militants affiliated to Taliban and al-Qaeda terrorist groups have killed thousands of Shia Muslims in the region since the start of the campaign. Hundreds of Shias have also been killed since the beginning of 2012.

The Shia leaders in Pakistan have called on the government to form a judicial commission to investigate the bloodshed.

The killing of Shias in Pakistan has also sparked international outrage, with rights groups and regional countries expressing concern over the ongoing carnage. Still, those behind the violence are rarely caught or punished.