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Mourners carry the body of one of the victims

At least nine people were killed in an attack outside a Sunni Muslim mosque in the Pakistani city of Lahore on Monday, the Pakistan authorities have confirmed.

Reports say three armed men on motorcycles opened fire on worshippers gathering for evening prayers.

Police said about four people were injured in the attack.

Some 30 people were in the mosque at the time.

Witnesses said the gunmen opened fire with automatic weapons for several minutes.

"I heard the rattling of gun shots and loud shrieks before I was run over by the yelling crowd," the AFP news agency quoted Mohammad Musa as saying.



The government called it a terrorist attack

A government official described the incident as a terrorist attack.

Sectarian violence

About 50 people have been killed in armed attacks in Pakistan in the last month.

A BBC correspondent in Lahore says most of them targeted Shia Muslims, suggesting a sectarian dimension.

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Violence also followed the execution of a Sunni Muslim radical, Haq Nawaz, last month.

He was hanged for the killing of an Iranian diplomat in Pakistan, 10 years ago.

Pakistan's military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, was in Lahore during this latest attack, for an overnight stay.

Last week, he had warned of stern action against terrorists.

"I want to say this very categorically that anyone who has indulged in such killings and whosoever is behind these killings, would be taken to task sternly," General Musharraf said.

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