

Pakistani Taliban claims responsibility for mosque blast that killed more than 40 people

From [CNN](#) and [The Guardian](#)

The Pakistani Taliban has claimed responsibility for a deadly blast in a mosque in Peshawar on Monday, the latest attack on the city in northwest Pakistan.

At least 46 people dead and more than 100 wounded in suicide bombing claimed by the Pakistan Taliban



A powerful explosion killed at least 46 people and left about 157 injured, according to Peshawar Police Chief Mohammad Aijaz Khan. Rescue operations are now underway in the mosque, which is situated inside a police compound and is mostly attended by law enforcement officials.

Sarbakaf Mohmand and Omar Mukaram Khurasani – two officials from the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) – put out statements saying the blast was “revenge” for the death of TTP militant Khalid Khorasani last year.

The TTP is a US-designated foreign terrorist organization operating in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. CNN cannot independently verify the group's claims. *However the Guardian's reporting seems very confident of their claim for responsibility*

The TTP have stepped up attacks in the region since November after a ceasefire with the government broke down, with recent blasts targeting military and police. The TTP, which is believed to be close to al-Qaida, has waged an insurgency in Pakistan for the past 15 years, fighting for stricter enforcement of Islamic laws and the release of jailed members.

Though the TTP are a militant group separate from the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Taliban's ascension to power in Kabul has been seen to empower the group in neighbouring Pakistan, especially in the border province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa...TTP attacks have been escalating in recent months. In January, a group of Taliban militants attacked a police station in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and in December dozens of Taliban detainees overpowered their guards at a counter-terrorism centre in the Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, took hostages and seized control of the facility for more than 24 hours. TTP's central spokesman Muhammad Khurasani is yet to comment on Monday's attack

In a statement to CNN, Khan, the Peshawar police chief, earlier said the incident inside the Police Lines Mosque was "probably a suicide attack," echoing Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The impact of the explosion collapsed the roof and one wall of the mosque and injured many people, said Zafar Khan, a local police officer. Witnesses said the blast took place in the main hall just as afternoon prayers were about to begin and worshippers were packed tightly inside. According to officials, the bomber had been standing in the front row.