

Mosque bombing leaves at least 50 dead

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- A suicide bombing at a mosque filled with worshipers for Friday prayers in Pakistan's Khyber tribal region killed at least 50 people, officials said.

The explosives went off as an imam began the service, the Pakistani newspaper Dawn reported.

"The moment the imam said 'Allahu Akbar,' the blast went off," Tauseer Khan, who was hospitalized in Peshawar, told the newspaper.

The blast occurred at a mosque in Bhagiari in the Tehsil Jamrud region of the Khyber Agency along the Pakistan-Afghanistan highway.

Rahat Gul, a Khyber administration spokesman, said 75 people were wounded, while the Press Trust of India reported 100 people were injured.

Between 250 and 300 people were in the mosque, said Tariq Hayat Khan, the region's top administrator.

"It was a suicide attack. The bomber was standing in the mosque. It's a two-story building and it has collapsed," Khan said.

While Khan said the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber, other officials said an explosive-laden vehicle rammed into the mosque, PTI reported.

Officials said the targets could have been members of the local Khasadar militia in the mosque at the time of the attack, PTI said.

So far, no one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Copyright © 2009, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Mosque bombing leaves at least 50 dead by UPI