

Violence continues at Pakistani mosque

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Pakistani forces Saturday exploded a fuel tank inside an Islamabad mosque taken over by radical Islamic students.

There was no immediate word of casualties. The explosion from inside the Lal Masjid, or Red Mosque, was heard across Islamabad, CNN reported. The fuel tank was used to run the mosque's generators.

At least 26 people have died since Tuesday when about 150 militant students attacked a police checkpoint close to the mosque.

Two students died Friday when they tried to surrender but were shot by other students, CNN reported. More than 1,200 students surrendered previously, but hundreds remained inside the mosque Saturday, CNN reported.

Tuesday's violence erupted as police were investigating the students for a recent string of civilian kidnappings.

Maulana Abdul Aziz, the mosque's top cleric, called for the students to surrender Thursday, a day after he was arrested trying to leave the mosque disguised in a burqa, the head-to-toe covering worn by some Muslim women.

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