

Ahmadiyya community leader killed in gun attack

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LAHORE: A local leader of the Ahmadiyya community, who is also a cousin of noble laureate Dr Abdus Salam, was killed on Thursday morning in Nankana Shaib in an attack apparently motivated by religious hatred. A son of Advocate Malik Saleem Latif, 69, the head of Nankana City Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, escaped unhurt in the gun attack that took place near Beri Wala Chowk.

Advocate Latif was travelling to his office at Nankana Sahib courts with his son Advocate Malik Farhan on a motorcycle when a gunman opened fire on them from behind. “Daddy fell from the bike after being shot and I sped away to save my life,” said Farhan.

“The gunman, donning a white prayer cap and black uniform normally worn by security guards, started chasing me and kept firing at me with a 12-bore pump action gun,” he added.

“In panic, I fell down from the motorcycle. But then I got up and started running while the gunman fired another shot and I ducked. Luckily, a bullet got jammed in the chamber and the gunman fled. I rushed to my injured father and managed to shift him to a nearby hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.”

Farhan said his family has taken the body of his father to their ancestral village of Sahiwal for burial. He added that the Nankana Bar Association announced a strike over the killing of his father and office bearers supported him in registering the FIR.

Farhan said the police have showed him a copy of the identity card of the gunman who has been identified as Rashid, a security guard of a gold shop in the area. He said the gun attack appeared to be motivated by religious hatred as they had no enmity with anybody. “Religious sentiments against Ahmadis in Nankana are not favourable due to hate speeches against them,” he claimed.



City Nankana police SHO Rawaz Virk told The Express Tribune that it was premature to speculate about the motives behind the fatal attack, though he admitted personal enmity was not the reason.

Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya spokesperson Saleemdun condemned the ‘terrible incident’ which, according to him, took place due to rampant hate campaigns against Ahmadis across the country. “Latif was attacked because of his religious belief,” he said in a statement. “Latif is survived by two sons and a daughter, and one of his sons is a civil judge.”

On Wednesday, an annual report was issued by the Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, claiming that at least six members of the community had been killed in Pakistan in 2016 because of their religious beliefs.

It cited Ordinance XX (blasphemy law) as the main reason behind the targeted killings of Ahmadis. “Since its [Ordinance XX] imposition in 1984, so far 250 Ahmadis have been killed,” it claimed.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1369395/ahmadi-leader-gunned-near-lahore/>