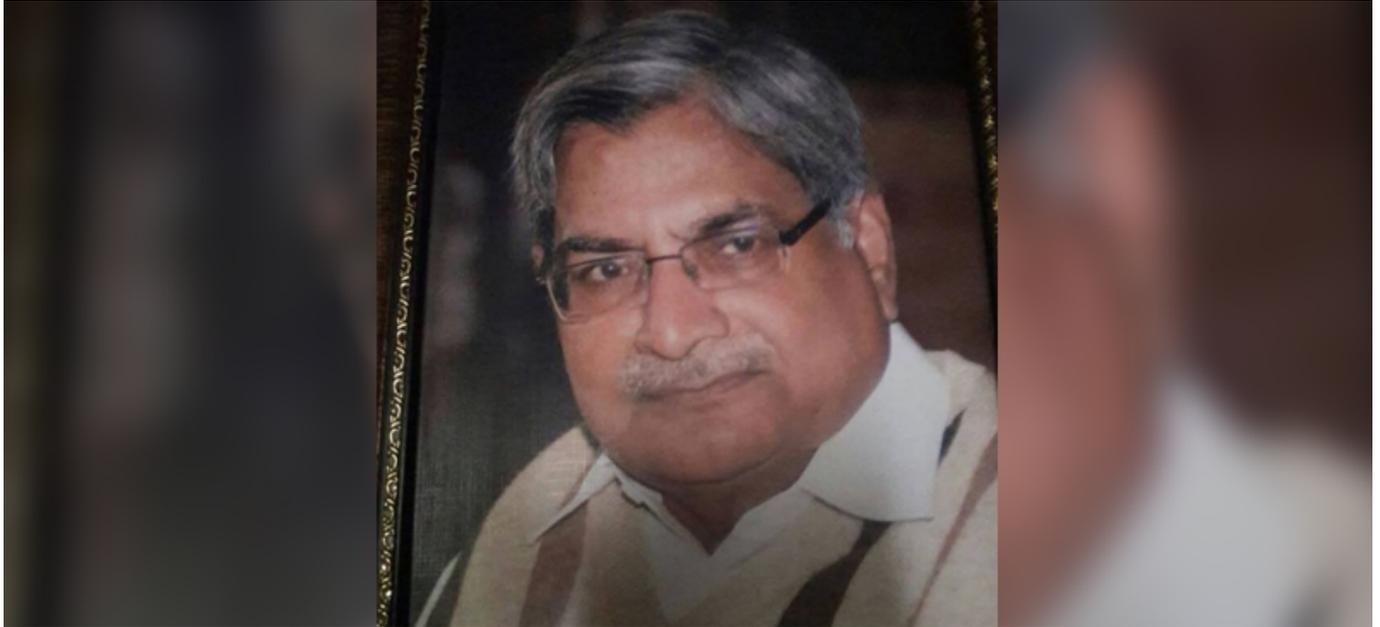


Cousin of Nobel laureate Abdus Salam gunned down in Nankana Sahib

Date : 30th March 2017



A prominent local leader of the Ahmadi community and a relative of Nobel laureate Abdus Salam was gunned down in Nankana Sahib on Thursday morning in an attack claimed by the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).

Advocate Malik Saleem Latif, a leader of the Jamaat-e-Ahmadiya in Nankana Sahib, was on his way to a local court on a motorbike along with his son, Advocate Farhan, when Latif was targeted and shot at by "unidentified attackers".

Latif's son informed *Dawn* that the attackers had fired at them from behind.

"Saleem Latif was spreading Ahmadi beliefs in the region," the LeJ said in a statement claiming Thursday's attack.

A district police officer (DPO) said that a suspect had been identified and police are narrowing their leads in the case. He refused to disclose further information for the time being.

"We have three teams investigating and searching for the assailants and trying to apprehend them," DPO Shahzada Billa Umer later told *Reuters*.

'No check on hate-mongering'

The murder sparked outrage in the Ahmadi community.



Saleem Uddin, a spokesman for the community, said the incident shows that ongoing military operations Zarb-i-Azb and Raddul Fasad are not being implemented the way they should be.

"Threats against Ahmadis are common in the area and Latif was a prominent member of the community and a well-known lawyer," he told *Reuters*.

"Around 1,700 advertisements were published against the Ahmadiya community in local and national newspapers in 2016," said Saleem. "There is no check on hate mongering and if the situation remains the same then the killing of Ahmadis will also continue," he added.

Saleem said the community is battling discriminatory laws in the country and expressed frustration that hate mongers are enjoying the support of the government.

The killing of the lawyer today puts the spotlight back on Pakistan's problem of Ahmadi persecution. The issue is deep-rooted and dates back to pre-Partition India.

The mistreatment of and mainstream bias against the community is one of the main reasons that Pakistan's first Nobel laureate, Dr Abdus Salam, fled the country to reside in the United Kingdom.

Although Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif recently made the 'bold gesture' to rename Quaid-i-Azam University's (QAU) physics department after Professor Abdus Salam, the community still greatly suffers at the hands of extremists.

Ahmadis are often subjected to humiliation and harassment in educational institutions and the workplace and in the media.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1323766/cousin-of-nobel-laureate-abdus-salam-gunned-down-in-nankana-sahib>