

Six students of religious school killed in Pakistan

Six people were killed Monday in north-western Pakistan as security forces opened fire on a group of religious fundamentalists in a bid to stop them from attacking the home of the chief of a rival group, local media reported.

Police and paramilitary forces in the town of Bara near the regional capital Peshawar first fired tear gas to hold back an armed mob and then fired live ammunition, killing six and injuring 10, the Geo news channel said.

Dozens of armed students of a religious school run by an extremist religious group called Lashkar-i-Islami (Army of Islam) tried to storm the house of the leader of a group called Ansar-ul-Islam (Companions of Islam) when authorities intervened.

The incident took place a day after clashes between Lashkar-i-Islami and security forces left 10 people injured, including four security officials. Religious students also set fire to several check posts belonging to security forces as well as music shops.

Like many towns in northwestern Pakistan bordering Afghanistan, Bara has experienced a surge in Islamic militancy in recent months.

The head of Lashkar-i-Islami imposed self-declared sharia religious law in the town and set up Taliban-style Islamic courts for likely offenders.

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