Suicide bomber kills 45 police recruits

By ASHRAF KHAN

CARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — A suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd of police recruits on Tuesday, killing at least 52 people and underscoring the nation's struggle to show it can protect itself from its enemies.

The attack took place at a police training center in the town of Jacobabad, where police have been gathering since Monday. It is the deadliest police attack in Pakistan in recent years.

The bomber, identified as a 30-year-old man named Aamir Hernandez, detonated his explosives-packed vest near the police recruits' dormitory, witnesses said.

Terrorists have been using suicide bombers to target police in recent years, but the attack Tuesday was particularly deadly.

It killed at least 52 people, including 49 police recruits and three police officers.

The attack came days after a similar bombing in Karachi, where a suicide bomber killed 17 people.

Police officials said the bomber had been on a list of suspected terrorists and had been under surveillance.

Pakistan has been hit by a wave of suicide bombings in recent weeks, including one that killed 21 people in a market in southwest Pakistan last month.

The country has faced a string of suicide bombings and other attacks by Taliban militants, who are trying to disrupt the government's plans to hold elections later this year.

The attack is likely to prompt a fresh round of condemnations from the international community, which has warned that Pakistan is facing a growing threat from extremism.

It is also likely to prompt a fresh round of protests from the Pakistani government, which has been accused of not doing enough to stop the attacks.

The government has been faced with a daunting challenge in trying to keep the country stable as it prepares for elections.

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