

Peshawar (Pakistan) school massacre: "The fight against Taliban is literally the fight for the lives of Pakistan's children"

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HRCP slams killing of children in Taliban attack

Lahore, December 16: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has called the killing of more than 120 children in a Taliban attack on an army-run school in Peshawar a national tragedy which it said must open the eyes of anyone still harbouring any doubts that Taliban and Pakistan could coexist.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Commission said: "HRCP is deeply saddened by the large number of children killed in the Taliban attack on ArmyPublic School in Peshawar. This is a national tragedy of immense proportions, and an extremely sad day for Pakistan. Our heart goes out to the families of the children whose lives have been cut short by this abhorrent act of terrorism.

"The target was an army-run school, but it was a school nonetheless. It is not children who fight against the Taliban. And yet the choice of the target and the heavy casualties among the children leave no doubt that the massacre was aimed at killing as many children as possible.

"Nothing, including religion, norms of armed conflict or even common decency, justifies such brutal targeting of children. But it is no secret that the killers and those who dispatched them to attack the school have respect neither for religious commandments nor notions of civilised or decent behaviour. The targeting of children made sense to them because they stand for blood-letting and not much else.

"HRCP reiterates its firm belief that Taliban and Pakistan cannot coexist and anyone still harbouring any notions to the contrary is naive beyond belief.

"It had already been established, much before Tuesday's massacre of children in Peshawar, where the Taliban stood in terms of education or value of children's lives. Their actions today have shown once again that Pakistan will not know peace until this madness is taken on in all its manifestations and defeated.

"This cold-blooded slaying of our children should drive home once for all what the fight against the extremist militants is all about. And if this too does not wake up all those who have been choosing their words carefully only with reference to the Taliban, who have buried their heads in the sand or who have refused to see the logic in launching operations against the barbaric bands responsible for killing tens of thousands of citizens then nothing else will.

"HRCP calls upon the federal and all provincial governments to pursue this battle with the unison the task demands and particularly make it an urgent priority to punish the puppet masters who ordered the children's massacre. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government must also rethink its policy of hospitality towards militants and side, through both acts and deeds, with the citizens suffering

from the militants' brutality.

"The fight against Taliban is literally the fight for the lives of Pakistan's children and to secure for them a future safe from the barbaric brutalities that the Taliban and their ilk stand for."

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