**Pakistan police claim arrests over gun attack on Sri Lankan cricket team**

Officials say 'some suspects' detained after assault on team bus kills six security guards and injures seven cricketers

Pakistani police today said they had arrested "some suspects" over yesterday's gun attack on the [Sri Lanka cricket team](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/sri-lanka-cricket-team).

The news came as the provincial government of Punjab offered a 10m rupee (£88,000) reward for information leading to the attackers' arrests.

The Lahore police chief, Haji Habibur Rehman, said none of those detained during overnight raids were the gunmen, but they were being questioned in the hope of developing leads.

"So far, we have not made any headway towards the perpetrators," Rehman told the Associated Press. He did not say how many people had been arrested.

Six security guards were killed and seven cricketers injured when up to 14 gunmen launched an attack on the team's coach as it approached the Gaddafi stadium in Lahore.

The provincial Punjab government published newspaper advertisements offering the reward, which showed enlarged images of two of the gunmen taken from TV footage of the attack.

"The dignity of the country has been hurt," the advertisement said. "Assist us in identifying the terrorists who fired at the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore."

In close-ups of the TV footage, two gunmen are seen running across a road, holding machine guns.

One is dressed in a brown shalwar kameez – a traditional baggy-trouser-and-shirt outfit – while the other is wearing a western-style blue shirt and trousers. Both appear to be clean-shaven, but the images are unclear.

None of the gunmen, believed to have numbered around 14, was killed. All fled the scene after a 15-minute shootout with the security officials guarding the cricket convoy.

At the Liberty roundabout in Lahore, where the attack happened, members of the public laid flowers and tributes.

A special flight carried the Sri Lankan players, including Thilan Samaraweera and Tharanga Paranavitana, who had been treated in hospital for bullet wounds, to Colombo, where they were reunited with their families.

The team's captain, Mahela Jayawardene, who suffered a foot injury, said: "I'm very happy that I could see my family and come back to Sri Lanka in one piece."

"Every breath I take, I'm glad that I can take it without a problem. It's great to be back in Sri Lanka with our families and loved ones."

The funerals of the Pakistani security officers killed in the attack took place in Lahore last night.

Yesterday's developments have sparked a furious row between the main opposition party, led by Nawaz Sharif, and the federal government in Islamabad, headed by the president, Asif Zardari.

Last week, Sharif's party was dismissed from running the provincial Punjab government, of which Lahore is the capital.

A Pakistani newspaper today published what it said was a police document, dating 22 January, that warned of an attack on the Sri Lankans.

There were suggestions that the letter may not be genuine, but Sharif's party has claimed it received detailed warnings of a terrorist plot against the Sri Lankan team while it was in office.

It said appropriate security was not provided for the Sri Lankan team – the responsibility for which rests with the new Punjab administration, being run by Zardari's appointees from Islamabad.

Zardari's party has strongly condemned what it calls "domestic political point scoring" over the attack.

In [Pakistan](http://www.theguardian.com/world/pakistan), many commentators, and some officials, have accused arch-enemy India of being behind the attack.

Independent experts believe a Pakistani jihadist group, Lashkar-e-Taiba, is most likely to have carried out the attack.

Meanwhile, New Zealand cricket officials said they expected to cancel this year's scheduled tour of Pakistan and play the series at a neutral venue.

"We are not going. I think that's pretty clear," the New Zealand [Cricket](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/cricket) chief executive, Justin Vaughan, said. "I don't see any international team will be going to Pakistan in the forseeable future."

Later, however, he said New Zealand officials needed to consult with the Pakistan cricket board and international cricket officials.

The prime minister, Gordon Brown, said: "My first thoughts are with those who died and those who have been casualties as a result of this terrorist attack.

"Obviously, when people are competing in sport and suddenly there's a terrorist attack, it is all the more tragic.

"What we have to do is to make sure that action against terrorism in Pakistan is effective. We know that the vast majority of al-Qaida fighters are in Pakistan, not in Afghanistan."

The Sri Lankan foreign minister, Rohitha Bogollagama, has flown to Pakistan for talks over the incident, the country's foreign secretary, Palitha Kohona, said.