

## Red Mosque militant says she will work for jihad

*BBC Urdu has conducted the first in-depth interview with one of the Islamic militants who were holed up inside the Red Mosque in Islamabad.*

., GBR, 2007-07-20 11:14:18 (IndiaPRwire.com)

For six months, the mosque complex - which also housed a women's seminary and a children's library - had been occupied by Islamic militants, among them children and several hundred women. One of them was an 18-year-old - the eldest of seven children from a village in the former Punjab. She spoke to a reporter from BBC Urdu at her village this week.

You can hear the full interview on demand by accessing the website, [bbcUrdu.com](http://bbcUrdu.com). From 20 July, [bbcUrdu.com](http://bbcUrdu.com) will also feature the young woman's diary, offering an insider's view of the siege.

Below are selected quotes from the interview. Please credit all mentions to BBC Urdu service.

### **On the thoughts of her family:**

I was not in contact with my family. The last time I contacted them, I told them that the army would not start an operation. They asked me to come back home but I said that I would never come back as I wished to be martyred. My brother said that he would force me to return, but I told him that he could be beaten up if he came near the seminary.

### **She refused to leave the mosque but about 430 women and children left the mosque on 4 July, after troops lay siege to the complex:**

A girl who came with us was taken home forcibly. She was crying and told the Teacher that she didn't want to go back. The Teacher asked her to go back with her parents. We felt sorry for her as we came here with the passion of Jihad and to preach Islam and now, because there was a problem, the girls had gone back. We did not appreciate the parents' behaviour. The Teacher said that no one was being stopped from going home and she asked parents to go and find their children to take them home. Very few girls left because they were afraid - those who left were either minors or they forced to leave by their parents.

### **As the assault by the Pakistani troops intensified:**

We were shocked that they cut off the electricity and also cut off the water and gas supply. What could we do? We were only praying to God to show them the right path. They were throwing tear gas shells in very large amounts. We were continually cleaning our eyes with salty water. Glass windows were breaking, doors were breaking. We couldn't sleep, sometimes one would sleep for an hour, or half an hour, the others would stay awake. That way we managed.

### **On July 10, the last day of the battle:**

We wanted to carry out suicide attacks. We didn't have enough ammunition to fight face to face. We had a small number of arms with which our Mujahidin brothers were fighting. We asked the Teacher to provide us with arms necessary for suicide attacks. She said that we didn't have sufficient

explosives. Yes, we had a passion and we were willing to go to all lengths.

We had been told by our teacher that they had put explosives in the building and that we shouldn't die in this manner, but come outside to face the bullets or even surrender. It was better to come out rather than die under the debris.

#### **The final assault by the troops on the mosque:**

We came outside with our hands raised and saw that the doors were closed and they were on the roof. There was no way to leave. We told them that we had surrendered and they should not shoot at us. A policeman showed us the way out and finally, we were taken outside.

They took us to another room and gave us food. We were crying a lot because Qurans were burning inside the Red Mosque which was on fire. We pleaded with them to let us take the Quran. We were very sad to see Qurans were being burnt in front of our own eyes. At sunset we were told that we were going to be sent home, and at night, we left the area.

#### **On returning home to her village:**

After meeting my father, I was overcome by grief as I had gone hoping to be a martyr and come back alive. Now they've attacked the Red Mosque and Jamia Hafsa, I wish the whole country will have Red Mosques. I will work for jihad, and open a madrassa and train people for jihad.

**- END -**

#### **For more information contact:**

Lala Najafova, International Publicist, BBC World Service  
+44(0)207 557 2944; lala.najafova@bbc.co.uk

#### **Notes to Editors:**

The award-winning website [bbcworldservice.com](http://bbcworldservice.com) is BBC World Service's multimedia Urdu-language site offering up-to-the-minute news coverage in text, audio and video as well as analysis, interactive debates and forums 24 hours a day, every day. [bbcworldservice.com](http://bbcworldservice.com) attracts more than 18.5 million page impressions per month.

BBC World Service is an international multi-media broadcaster delivering programmes and services in 33 languages. It uses multiple platforms to reach 183 million listeners globally, including SW, AM, FM, digital satellite and cable channels. It has around 2,000 partner radio stations which take BBC content, and numerous partnerships supplying content to mobile phones. Its international online sites, which include audio and video content and offer opportunities to interact directly with world events, recorded 763 million page impressions in March 2007, equating to 38.5 million unique users. For more information, visit [bbcworldservice.com](http://bbcworldservice.com).