

Russia's ambassador to Turkey shot dead by gunman in Ankara

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Ankara (Turkey): Russia's ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov was on Monday badly wounded and later died after an unidentified gunman opened fire at a photo exhibition in the Turkish capital.

A Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman confirmed that Karlov has died after being shot in Ankara.

Turkish police shot and killed the gunman Turkish police shot and killed the gunman, Turkish station NTV reported.

The ambassador was several minutes into a speech at the embassy-sponsored exhibition in the capital, Ankara, when a man wearing a suit and tie shouted "Allahu Akbar" and fired at least eight shots, according to an AP photographer in the audience.

The attacker also said some words in Russian and smashed several of the photos hung for the exhibition. There was panic as people ran for cover.

NTV said three other people were wounded in the attack.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Karlov was shot "when an unidentified assailant opened chaotic gunfire during a public event in Ankara."

She said Russia was in contact with Turkish officials about the incident.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby said U.S. officials were aware of reports about the shooting.

"We condemn this act of violence, whatever its source," Kirby said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family."

The attack comes after days of protests in Turkey over Russia's role in Syria, although both the nations are now working closely together to evacuate citizens from Aleppo.

- (With AP inputs)