



BRIEFING UPDATE

PERSECUTION OF AHMADI MUSLIMS IN PAKISTAN

JANUARY 2024

**POLICE DESTROY 80 AHMADI
MUSLIM HEADSTONES**



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Headlines

VOTING RIGHTS DENIED

Ahmadi Muslims were put onto a separate electoral list to the rest of the Pakistani population for the General Election on 8 February.

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CREED REMOVED

Police removed the Islamic creed and Islamic inscriptions from an Ahmadi Muslim mosque and Ahmadi Muslim houses in Sargodha.

SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION





GRAVES DESTROYED

The headstones of 80 Ahmadi Muslims were destroyed across two cemeteries in Sialkot.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR MORE INFORMATION

STATE-SPONSORED PERSECUTION OF AHMADI MUSLIMS IN PAKISTAN

Ahmadi Muslims face **3 years imprisonment** under federal laws for:

-  Self-identifying as a Muslim
-  Calling their place of worship a mosque
-  Making the Islamic call to prayer (Azan)
-  Preaching or propagating their faith

AHMADI MUSLIMS' VOTING RIGHTS DENIED AGAIN

On 8 February, Pakistan held its General Elections to its new Prime Minister. Ahmadi Muslims were yet again systematically disenfranchised, relegated to a separate voter list solely based on their faith, denying over 500,000 Ahmadi Muslims their fundamental right to participate in the democratic process. Despite the nation's professed commitment to democracy, discriminatory provisions in electoral laws perpetuate this exclusionary practice.

AHMADI MUSLIM MOSQUE ATTACKED

On 26 December, in Mughalpura, Lahore, two unidentified motorcycle riders approached the local Ahmadi Muslim mosque at the time of prayer. They shouted abuse and threw a brick at the main gate. The incident was reported to the police.

ISLAMIC CREED REMOVED FROM AHMADI MUSLIM MOSQUE

On 4 January, police arrived at the local Ahmadi Muslim mosque in Thatta Joyia, Sargodha, and painted over the Islamic creed (Kalima) written on the mosque wall. Islamic expressions like Mash'Allah ('God wills it') and Bismillah ('In the name of God') were removed from the house of a local Ahmadi Muslims as well. Police also requested Ahmadi Muslims to identify Ahmadi Muslim headstones at the local cemetery in order for them to remove Islamic inscriptions.



Police painting over the Islamic creed



Inscription removed

POLICE DESTROY 80 AHMADI MUSLIM HEADSTONES

On 24 January, in Sialkot, four policemen visited a cemetery allotted to Ahmadi Muslims and damaged 65 headstones. Upon inquiries by local Ahmadi Muslims to the police on the reason of the attack, police officials stated that the Assistant Commissioner for the area had ordered the headstones to be destroyed. In the afternoon, police officials visited a separate cemetery in Bharoke. The headstones of a further ten Ahmadi Muslims were damaged, while another five headstones were blackened with ink.



Debris of damaged headstones



Police using hammer to destroy graves

AHMADI MUSLIM ARRESTED ON FALSE ALLEGATIONS

Ahmadi Muslim Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad had a case registered against him on 1 January in Kotli, Azad Kashmir, under the anti-Ahmadi Muslim section 298-C of the Pakistan Penal Code which carries a three-year jail term. The father-in-law of Mr. Ahmad's daughter, Mr. Hussain is a non-Ahmadi Muslim. He made the initial complaint against Mr. Ahmad. Mr Hussain alleged that the conversion of his son to the Ahmadi Muslim faith in order to marry Mr. Ahmad's daughter was due to Mr Ahmad's preaching and thus reported him to the authorities.

AHMADI MUSLIM BURIAL DENIED

After the passing of Ahmadi Muslim Mr. Fazal Karim on January 28th, plans were made for his burial at a cemetery in Sahwala, Sheikhpura, designated for Ahmadi Muslims. To ensure the local village was aware of the burial arrangements, an announcement was broadcasted over the mosque loudspeaker. However, upon receiving this information, a local cleric physically assaulted the announcer and rallied other clerics from nearby villages to oppose the burial. A violent mob, armed with axes and firearms, converged on the cemetery despite the presence of police, coercing the Ahmadi Muslim family to bury Mr. Karim at a different location further from the village. The mob proceeded to locate the dug-out grave, filled it with soil, and demolished the surrounding concrete slabs, throwing the debris and digging tools into the grave.



Mob protesting against burial

AHMADI MUSLIM GRAVES VANDALISED

On December 30th, in Govind, Sialkot, an individual publicly declared at the mosque his intention to desecrate the graves of Ahmadi Muslims laid to rest in the nearby cemetery. In response, the police interacted with the Ahmadi Muslim community, who adamantly opposed any vandalism of the graves. Despite their efforts, the next day, the Ahmadi Muslims were dismayed to find that eight graves in the cemetery had been ravaged. The perpetrators not only destroyed the graves but also removed evidence of the attack the scene.



Damaged headstones

AHMADI MUSLIMS BEHIND BARS

1

Mr. Rohan Ahmad, Malik Usman Ahmad and Hafiz Tariq Shehzad, etc. were booked on May 26, 2020 with FIR Nr. 29/2020 at Police Station FIA Cyber Crimes Wing, Lahore under PPCs 295-B, 298-C, 120-B, 109, 34 R/W, 2016-PECA-11. Pakistan's Cyber Crimes Department, Lahore that works under Federal Investigation Agency, arrested Mr. Rohan Ahmad.

Malik Usman Ahmad and Hafiz Tariq Shehzad were arrested dated 30.09.2020 on reporting to the FIA office; they are in Camp Jail Lahore.

Syed Ali Abbas, Addl. Sessions Judge Lahore added the blasphemy clause PPC 295-C to the charge sheet on June 29, 2021. Thus, they are now exposed to penalty of death. The SC rejected their post-arrest bail application.

2

Mr. Shiraz Ahmad etc. were booked by Cyber Crime Police Station Lahore on June 20, 2019 under FIR Nr. 88, under PPCs 295-A, 298-C, PECA-11, for allegedly creating a group "Sindh Salamati" and allegedly sharing Ahmadiyya content in it. He was arrested from Hafizabad on February 25, 2021. Subsequently the trial court added section 295-C of PPC to the said case.

3

Malik Zaheer Ahmad was arrested on September 30, 2020 in a fabricated case under Sections 298-C, 295-B, PECA-11 and 109. He was granted bail on February 23, 2021 and was expected to be released in four to five days after paper formalities. On February 27, when Malik Zaheer Ahmad was expected to be released from the Camp Jail, the Cyber Crime Wing Lahore team arrested him under FIR Nr. 88 as outlined in the above case, under PPCs 295-A, 298-C, PECA-11. He was not even formally nominated in the case.

4

Mr. Mubarak Ahmad Sani was arrested on January 7, 2023 from his home in Rabwah. He was booked with FIR Nr. 661/22 under sections 295-B, 298-C and the Punjab Holy Quran (Printing and Recording) Act 2011. He was sent to Jhang Jail after judicial remand and later transferred to District Jail Faisalabad. His bail application is under trial in the court of Additional Sessions Judge Lalian, District Chiniot.

SOME RELEVANT PAKISTAN PENAL CODES

Injuring or defiling places of worship, with the intent to insult the religion of any class

295

Up to two years' imprisonment or fine, or both

Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage the religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs

295 A

Up to ten years' imprisonment, or fine, or both

Defiling, etc., of the Holy Quran

295 B

Life imprisonment

Use of derogatory remarks, etc; in respect of the Holy Prophet

295 C

Death and fine

Uttering words, etc., with the deliberate intent to injure religious feelings

298

Up to one year imprisonment or fine, or both

Use of derogatory remarks etc., in respect of holy personages

298 A

Three years' imprisonment, or fine, or both

Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles etc., reserved for certain holy personages or places, by Ahmadis

298 B

Three years' imprisonment and fine

An Ahmadi, calling himself a Muslim, or preaching or propagating his faith, or outraging the religious feelings of Muslims, or posing himself as a Muslim

298 C

Three years' imprisonment and fine

Persecution Facts

SINCE JANUARY 2021

- 6 Ahmadis have been murdered for faith, raising the total to 276 since the promulgation of Ordinance XX
- 19 murder attempts, 10 attacks during 2022, 2 attacks in April 2023.
- Fabricated cases against 8 Ahmadis were registered during Nov 2022 and an FIR is registered against some members of Ahmadiyya leadership in Pakistan in December. Two new cases registered, one Ahmadi arrested in February 2023
- 2 Ahmadi prisoners died in custody, they were imprisoned for their faith.
- 28 Ahmadiyya mosques desecrated, 1 mosque sealed by the authorities. 8 attacked in during 2023
- 246 graves have been desecrated, 180 of these were during 2022. Burial of an Ahmadi lady denied and the graveyard sealed in November. Burial of another Ahmadi lady denied in January 2023.
- 47 new cases have been registered against Ahmadis under the blasphemy laws & Anti-Ahmadi laws, 10 of these were registered during August. A criminal case was registered against 16 Ahmadis during September and November 2022. Another case was registered against the top leadership of Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan in December 2022.
- Sacred inscription from 22 houses and shops have been removed

AHMADI MUSLIM CENSORSHIP

- The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has blocked 20 non-Pakistan based foreign websites affiliated with the worldwide community and properly registered in their respective countries. PTA has also issued notices to their operators with criminal prosecution for violating Pakistan's blasphemy and anti-Ahmadiyya laws. According to PTA any website that portrays Ahmadis as Muslims will be blocked in Pakistan.
- Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has ordered that Ahmadi channels (MTA) should not be carried by any distribution service licensee.
- In 1996, the government of Punjab issued a notification to return all nationalized educational institutions, that affected the community's 8 Schools and 2 colleges which were nationalized in 1972. Despite fulfilling all terms and conditions, and regardless of repeated requests and numerous reminders, the community's institutions are not denationalized.
- The entire population of Rabwah i.e. Ahmadiyya headquarters in Pakistan, was charged under section PPC 298-C on Dec. 15, 1989, and again on June 8, 2008. (Rabwah population is approximately 60,000.)
- The government has banned all outdoor rallies & conferences of Ahmadis in Rabwah.
- The government of Punjab has banned the publishing of the Quran and its translation
- The government of Punjab has banned the entire written works of the Founder of Ahmadiyyat.
- Ahmadiyya daily newspaper and periodicals for women, youth, children and elders were banned by a Punjab government notification.
- Authorities have prohibited sports events organized at a community level.

In Pakistan, Ahmadi Muslims are the only community who are:

- Explicitly targeted by the constitutional and criminal laws
- Denied voting rights for more than 35 years
- Subjected to a publications ban on their entire religious texts



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