



BRIEFING UPDATE

PERSECUTION OF AHMADI MUSLIMS IN PAKISTAN

MARCH 2024

AHMADI MUSLIM SHOT DEAD



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Headlines

SHOT FOR FAITH

An Ahmadi Muslim in Bahawalpur was shot dead by two assailants on motorbikes while leaving his village. He leaves behind his wife and three children.

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GRAVES DESTROYED

The gravestones of 10 Ahmadi Muslims were destroyed in Kotli including that of a soldier who fought for Pakistan 33 years ago.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR MORE INFORMATION





BANNER HATE

Banners were erected outside a hospital in Faisalabad likening Ahmadi Muslims to cancer.

SEE PAGE 5 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 MUSLIM SHOT DEAD

In Hasilpur, Bahawalpur, on 4 March, 54-year-old Mr Tahir Iqbal Cheema, president of the local Ahmadi Muslim community, was shot dead. He was targeted by two men on motorcycles on his way out of the village. He leaves behind his wife and three children. Extremist clerics held protests in the local area protesting the case made against the accused.



Late Mr Tariq Ahmad Cheema

AHMADI MUSLIMS STRIPPED OF RIGHTS

On 11 March, the Assistant Commissioner (AC) of Kotli, Azad Kashmir, held a meeting between the Ahmadi Muslims of Tatta Paani and Goi and those opposed to the community. The AC announced a number of decisions which included:

- No Ahmadi Muslim mosque to be built in the style of a mosque; with restrictions on minarets and domes.
- The niches of Ahmadi Muslim mosques and Ahmadi Muslim tombstones to be covered to prevent any 'misunderstanding'.
- Ahmadi Muslims to be forbidden from building water wells for non-Ahmadi Muslims.
- Ahmadi Muslims should not provide any financial assistance or introduce any scheme of benefit to non-Ahmadi Muslims.

These statements amount to a gross violation of the fundamental rights of citizens under the Constitution of Pakistan and international covenants.

AHMADI MUSLIM STUDENT FORCED TO BREAK FAST

An Ahmadi Muslim student at Quaid-e-Azam Public School, Hazeem Ahmad, was undertaking a fast during Ramadan when a classmate forced him to break his fast and called him an infidel. Hazeem's mother later complained to the school. The principal responded with a threat to expel every Ahmadi Muslim student who attended the school instead of offering any sympathy. Hazeem was made to leave the school early that day.

AHMADI MUSLIM GRAVESTONES DESTROYED

The gravestones of eight Ahmadi Muslims were destroyed in Kotli, Azad Jammu Kashmir, on 7 March during the night. The perpetrators took away the debris of the attack with them. On 12 March, two more graves were damaged; one of which belonged to Ahmadi Muslim Mr Naik Ghulam Shafi – a soldier who died fighting for Pakistan almost 33 years ago.



Remains of damaged gravestones

DEROGATORY BANNERS DISPLAYED OUTSIDE HOSPITAL

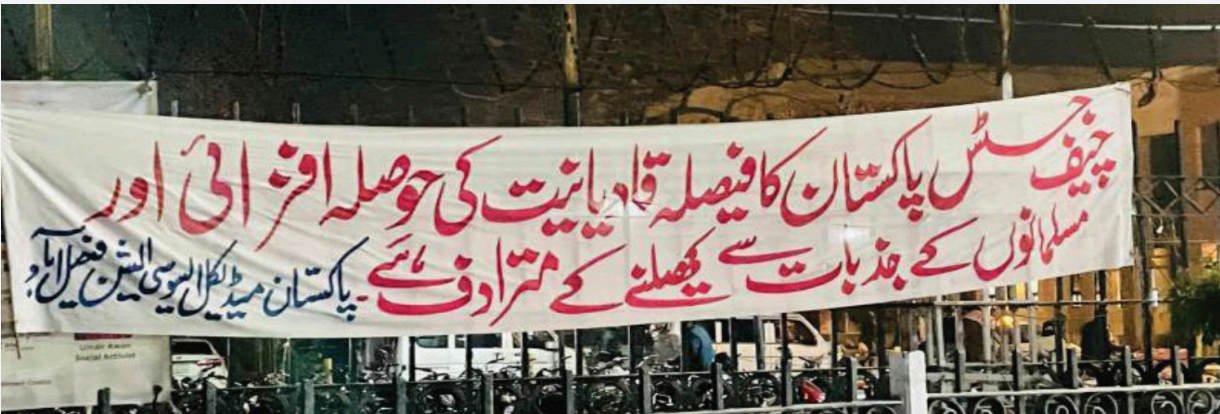
On 16 March, multiple banners displaying anti-Ahmadi Muslim sentiments were put up outside Faisalabad's Allied Hospital. This came after a recent Supreme Court ruling to grant bail to an Ahmadi Muslim. The banners, which featured the Pakistan Medical Association, described Ahmadi Muslims as a cancer that they would not allow to spread and that the Supreme Court's decision went against the Constitution of Pakistan.



'Qadianism [Islam Ahmadiyyat] is cancer. Muslims will not allow it to spread'



'The verdict by the Chief Justice of Pakistan is the same as encouraging Qadianiat [Islam Ahmadiyyat] and playing with the emotions of Muslims'



'The CJP's verdict in favour of Qadianiat [Islam Ahmadiyyat] goes against Pakistan's Constitution'

AHMADI MUSLIMS BEHIND BARS

1

Mr. Rohan Ahmad, Malik Usman Ahmad and Hafiz Tariq Shehzad were booked on 26 May, 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, allegedly for sharing a WhatsApp message regarding a religious Quiz program and a General Knowledge competition arranged by the youth organization of the Ahmadi Muslim community. Pakistan's Cyber Crimes Department, Lahore which works under Federal Investigation Agency, arrested Mr. Rohan Ahmad.

Malik Usman Ahmad and Hafiz Tariq Shehzad were arrested later on 30.09.2020 on reporting to the FIA office; they are in Camp Jail Lahore. Addl. Sessions Judge Lahore added the blasphemy clause PPC 295-C to the charge sheet on June 29, 2021, exposing them to the penalty of death. The Supreme Court rejected their post-arrest bail application. Thereafter the High Court rejected Rohan's bail on statutory grounds on June 8, 2023. The statutory ground here means 'trial not concluded within 2 years of the arrest of the accused'. The Supreme Court of Pakistan accepted Rohan's Post Arrest Bail Application on January 15, 2024 on statutory grounds and he has returned home safely after being incarcerated for almost 4 years. The trial failed to furnish complete copies of the documents appended to the Police Report under Section 173 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). The accused filed application before trial court for providing complete documents. The trial court dismissed the application. The Accused filed Criminal Revision against the order which is pending before Lahore High Court, Lahore.

2

Malik Zaheer Ahmad was arrested on September 30, 2020, in a fabricated case under Sections 295-B, 298-C, PECA-11, and 109. He was granted bail on February 23, 2021, and was expected to be released in four to five days after the 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, and PECA11. He was not even formally nominated in the case. His bail plea was rejected by the Supreme Court. His bail on statutory ground has been dismissed

3

Mr. Mubarak Ahmad Sani was arrested on January 7, 2023, from his home in Rabwah. He was booked with FIR Nr. 661/22 under the blasphemy section 295-B, PPC 298-C, and the Punjab Holy Quran (Printing and Recording) Act 2011, allegedly for printing, publishing and distributing copies of the Holy Quran as a prize among students who memorized the Holy Quran. He was sent to Jhang Jail after judicial remand and later transferred to District Jail Faisalabad. His bail plea has been rejected by Additional Sessions Judge Lalian, District Chiniot and Lahore High Court. Now his leave to appeal petition for his bail is being filed before Supreme Court of Pakistan. The accused challenged the framing of charge under sections 295B PPC and section 9(1) of The Punjab Quran (Printing and Recording) Act, 2011 but the trial court and Lahore High Court dismissed his petitions now the matter is pending before Supreme Court of Pakistan. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has accepted Mr. Mubarak Sani's Post Arrest Bail Application on 06.02.2024 and petition for amendment of charge. The Supreme Court deleted the charge under section 298C, 298B of PPC and 9(1) of Quran Act. He has returned home safely after being incarcerated for more than 1 year.

4

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 Salamat" and sharing Ahmadiyya content in it. He was arrested from Hafizabad on February 25, 2021. Subsequently, the trial court added the Blasphemy section 295-C of PPC to the said case. His bail plea was rejected by the Supreme Court.

5

Imtiaz Ahmed is currently behind bars. An FIR No: 1/2024 under section 295-C was filed at Kotli Police Station In Azad Jammu & Kashmir on January 1st against him. His bail application has been rejected by the Sessions Court. Now an appeal against this decision will be filed before the High Court.

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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