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**CONTINUOUS DEPRIVATION OF  
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOM AND  
PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS  
MINORITIES IN PAKISTAN**





**PICTURE OF ASIA BIBI STEPPED-ON  
(AFTER BEING CLEARED OF BLASPHEMY)**



# VIOLENT FOUL MOUTHING AND HATE MONGERING AGAINST AHMADIS BY PAKISTANI CLERICS AND POLITICANS

CHAIRMAN PAKISTAN ULEMA COUNCIL TAHIR ASHRAFI SPEAKS AT INTERFAITH HARMONY CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY PAKISTAN'S MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

**“I AM NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT THEM (AHMADIS) IN THIS COUNTRY”**



<https://youtu.be/rGTeEG3or7k>

## TRANSLATION:

Qadianiat have not accepted the constitution of Pakistan till now. We want to inform the Parliamentary Secretary that we are bearing one another and this is the reason why we are sitting here. We recognize the one who recognizes Pakistan. We recognize the one who recognizes the Khatm e Nabuat of Muhammad (P B U H). We recognize the one who recognizes the constitution the constitution of Pakistan. And the one who does not recognize the constitution we does not recognize him.



There are Christians residing in Pakistan. Whenever they are in any sort of discomfort we are there to comfort them even before the government. We stand with them. Whether they are suicide blasts, bomb blasts or be it anything else. Our respected, respected doctor is here ask all of their community. Then there are our Sikh brothers, whenever they are in any sort of problem we are there for them. Our Hindu brothers are here. Whenever they are in any sort of problem we are there for them. There are small number of Jews as well residing here, if they face any kind of problem we are there for them, because they recognize the constitution of Pakistan. Those who do not recognize the constitution of Pakistan you say state? I am not ready to even bear them in the country. Therefore the one who does not recognize the constitution of Pakistan, the one who does not recognize the law of the country. He is a traitor of this country rather than a loyal. Adding further to it we say that we acquired this country in the credit of the Holy Prophet (P B U H). No one has presented to me this country in a plate. There is a blood being shed in the name of this country, in the name of the Holy Prophet (P B U H). The Christians reside in this country; the Sikhs reside in this country. Hindus reside in this country. Bhais reside in this country. It was the objection of Hafiz Zubair and the objection of the Ulemas. But they get themselves recognized as Bhais. But does any Qadiani has enough courage, including Mirza Masroor that he may come here and say that we recognize the constitution of Pakistan.

I am speaking to the Qadianis here. They are mischievous, they carry out fraud. They are misleading the humanity by using the names of the Muslims, and respected Pir Sahab these things are ought to be remembered. There are number of objections already raised against your community, and we are busy to defend it day and night, because we know that nor Imran Khan is a Qadiani neither he is a supporter of the Qadiani. He has the same believe on Khatm e Nabuat as do you and I have. And While Religious for Heritage Pir Saeed Ul Hasan Shah is not present here. We cannot even imagine that the Qadianis are acting actively at this point of time. To act against the Qadianis is the unity of the Ummah. To speak against the Qadianis is a religious harmony. Because, one minute, Hadhrat, Hadhrat I am just finishing it. I am just finishing it.

To speak against the Qadianis is a religious harmony, because the first claim of Mirza Qadiani is to be Allah and to be Allah's wife. Even today he claims to be the Messiah, does our Christian community accept him to be the Messiah. And similarly like we do not recognize Mirza Qadiani as a Muslim, we do not recognize Qadianis as Muslims, we consider Mirza Qadiani anti-Christ, we consider him to be a liar. Similarly my Christian community considers him to be anti-Christ and liar.

Inter-religious talk is a great thing. Inter-sect talk is also a great thing. But remember Qadianiat is neither a religion nor a sect. It is an evil created by the British. It is an evil created to attack Islam, Quran and Jihad and it is created to attack the Khatm e Nabuat of the Holy Prophet (P B U H). We are ready to sacrifice our lives for the non-



Muslims, because they are our Pakistani brothers. But the one who does not recognize the constitution of Pakistan, the country acquired in the name of the holy Prophet (P B U H). Do not recognize the Holy Prophet as the final Prophet (P B U H), we cannot recognize them. If this is called inter-religion talk that Qadianiat should be accepted than we cannot accept that. This type of inter-religion we have not seen in history, this cannot be done and never will be done.

Upon us is only to convey the message.

**CLERIC SHEIKH KHURAM THREATENS PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN, THAT IF HE DOES NOT TAKE ACTION AGAINST AHMADIS, 98% OF PEOPLE WILL GRAB HIS COLLOR**

**“QADIANIS ARE DECEITFUL SECT AND SLAVE TO BRITISH”**



[https://youtu.be/t4Jan-oN\\_k4](https://youtu.be/t4Jan-oN_k4)

**TRANSLATION:**

We must remember that it is written in the constitution that Qadiani cannot construct mosque similar to the pattern of our mosques. Today, Qadianis are deceitful sect and slave to British. If they follow pattern of our mosques, then Imran Khan (ESQ) must remember that he is assisting this 2.50% sect. Imran Khan (ESQ) must also remember that other 98% of community know how to grab you by the collar and how to get their rights. (Followed by slogans: Tajdar Khatm e Nabuwat Zindabad)



## CHAIRMAN PAKISTAN ULEMA COUNCIL TAHIR ASHRAFI THREATENS AND INCITES HATRED AGAINST AHMADIS

**“AHMADIS ARE ATTACKING PAKISTAN THROUGH DECEITS”**



<https://youtu.be/zQzjlgpL1o>

### **TRANSLATION:**

Qadianis are once again attacking Pakistan through their deceits. By the grace of God, Muslims of Pakistan are still attentive. That is why, whether it is a matter of legislation or Atif Mian, Qadianiat is not prevailing in national assembly. Now, they are saying that Atif Mian went to Makka and attended conference over there. I challenge Qadianiat to ask Atif Mian to apply Saudi visa with Qadiani identity. If he gets Saudi visa, we will pay Qadianiat any fine. By the grace of God, in kingdom of Saudi Arabia, everyone agrees that they are pagans. Shiekh Bin Baz have given comprehensive fiat that none of the pagans can enter Makka Mukarama and Madina Munawarah in accordance with Quran and Sunna. According to our research, Atif Mian didn't unveil his Qadiani identity before applying visa. If he had unveiled his identity, he would not have been granted Saudi visa.

That is why we say that if any Qadiani including Atif Mian or Mirza Masroor has courage, apply and show us a Saudi visa issued by any Saudi consulate of the world. By the grace of God, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded on the base of Quran and Sunna. Believing oneness of God and recognizing Holy Prophet (PBUH) as last Prophet is its identity. This propaganda of Qadianis is also a part of their hate campaign against kingdom. Few days back, Mirza Masroor also highlighted this campaign through his statement in which he instructed Qadianis to reach Makka and Madina to spread violence.



Once again, I challenge Atif Mian, Mirza Masroor and all liars of Qadianiat to apply and show us a Saudi visa issued by any Saudi consulate of the world. If they obtain visa through deceit by claiming themselves among Muslims or Muslim employees of consulate are unable to report this act to Saudi consulate, this matter should not be associated with Islam and Muslims.

**ORYA MAQBOOK JAN, JOURNALIST AND RELIGIOUS AGITATOR AT A CONFERENCE OF KHATME NABUWAT (FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD)**

**"AHMADIS ARE GUILTY OF REBELLION"**



<https://youtu.be/SQhh8GIG8tg>

**TRANSLATION:**

The Qadianis say that they will not follow the restriction imposed on them by the constitution whereby they have been declared non-Muslim. So, it is a popular national thought nowadays that this issue is not a religious issue. The fact is that they reject the constitution, so they commit rebellion against the constitution. Hence, they are guilty of rebellion. So, we will not allow any rebel to live here. This is something about which neither the so-called custodians of the constitution speak, nor anyone else talks about it'.



## A CRISIS FOR MINORITIES IN PAKISTAN

By [Rozina Ali](#)

March 29, 2016



*As family members mourn those killed in this week's terrorist attack at a Lahore park, Pakistan faces the difficult task of counteracting extremism without caving to the military or the country's hard-liners.*

Photograph by Mohsin Raza / Reuters

When the bomb went off in Lahore's Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park, on Sunday, families were settled into the lull of Easter celebrations. Picnics were out and children were scattered across the playground. The suicide bomber walked purposefully to the [swings](#) before blowing himself up, along with the kids around him. More than seventy people died in the attack, at least twenty-nine of them children, and more than three hundred people were wounded. One reporter who arrived at the scene told me that victims were rushed to the hospital in ambulances, taxis, private cars, and rickshaws, while surviving children were rounded up as security guards tried to find their families.

Jamaat ul-Ahrar, a splinter group of the Pakistan Taliban that has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, took credit for the attack, [claiming](#) that it targeted Christians (in fact, more Muslims than Christians were killed). For nearly two decades, as terrorist attacks have intensified in the country, its minorities—Christians, Sufis, Shias—have been under assault. Mehreen Zahra-Malik, a Reuters journalist based in Islamabad, told me that the Christian families she spoke with in Lahore insisted that the government is doing its best to protect them. In the aftermath of past attacks, authorities had increased security at churches, especially on Sundays. Perhaps as a result, some surmised, the terrorists attacked a public park—not just hurting Christians, but Pakistanis of all faiths.

The news of another attack came as no surprise in Pakistan, where [more people](#) are killed by terrorism than in Europe and the United States combined. In one of the country's deadliest incidents, the Taliban massacred a hundred and thirty-two children at an Army school in [Peshawar](#), in December, 2014. Lahore, too, has seen regular extremist violence. Jamaat ul-Ahrar attacked [two churches](#) last year, killing at least fifteen people. Still, Sunday's bombing, which was big, public, and in reality indiscriminate, came as a shock to the city. It reflected terrorism's alarming spread from the mountains of Northwest Pakistan and the chaos of Karachi into the heart of Punjab province, where Lahore—a city of history and poetry, fashion and music, famed foods and delicate gardens—is located.

Both Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother, Shehbaz, the province's Chief Minister, hail from Lahore. Despite this—or perhaps because of it—the province has enjoyed relative autonomy, escaping the strong fist of the Army. While the Army has been conducting widespread counterterrorism raids in Karachi over the past two years, detaining thousands, Sharif's political party, the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), has refused to allow such troop levels into Punjab. Instead, it has relied on police and counterterrorism forces inside the province to weed out extremists. Pakistan has regularly teetered between Army and civilian rule, and while 2013 saw the first transition from one civilian government to the next, the threat of military rule, especially in light of the government's failure to prevent recent terrorist attacks, is all too present.

Even as the tension between the military and political establishments came to the fore with the Lahore bomb blast, the government was under severe pressure from religious hard-liners in the capital of Islamabad, a hundred and sixty miles south. Last month, the government [executed](#) Mumtaz Qadri, a policeman who assassinated Punjab's relatively liberal governor, Salman Taseer, in 2011. Taseer was trying to reform Pakistan's blasphemy laws, which criminalize desecration of holy (mainly Islamic) places and books, and he had defended a Christian woman, Asia Bibi, who



was given the [death penalty](#) by Punjab's government for insulting the Prophet Muhammad (the sentence was later overturned).

When Qadri killed Taseer, right-wing religious groups lauded him as a hero. This weekend, tens of thousands of his supporters, members of the Barelvi movement of Islam, [marched into Islamabad](#) to protest his hanging, setting fire to buses and metro stations and damaging property around the city. Since Sunday, their numbers have dwindled into the thousands, but the group has settled in front of the parliamentary building as police try to quell any more violence. They have presented the government with a list of [demands](#), which include implementing their version of Sharia law, removing secular and Ahmadi Muslim politicians from government, executing Asia Bibi, declaring Qadri a martyr, and releasing jailed Sunni clerics even if they were convicted of terrorism.

Unlike the Taliban, who follow the Deobandi and Salafi strains of Islam, Barelvis are relatively tolerant of minorities. Still, when I spoke with Raza Rumi, a commentator and analyst based in Ithaca, he said that blasphemy was a key issue for the Barelvis and that they condone violence to protect religion. Sharif's party, the P.M.L.(N.), has historically relied on right-wing groups such as the Barelvis for political support, but as the government moves toward tolerating a more outspoken civil society and clamps down on extremism (Rumi told me Qadri's execution would have been unthinkable five years ago), the right-wing base is pushing back. "These groups feel betrayed by Nawaz," Rumi said.

Yesterday, after closed-door deliberations and strong [statements](#) by Sharif that he will "avenge every last drop" of blood spilled in Sunday's attack, Army rangers entered Lahore for their first counterterror raids in the province. [More than five thousand](#) people have reportedly been arrested. The military's strong presence in the political heartland of the country could conceivably weaken the Sharifs' hold on power. Meanwhile, the protesters in Islamabad are in the third day of their sit-in. Some reporters speculate that government representatives are speaking with the protesters today, but so far authorities have neither cracked down on nor negotiated with them. Zahra-Malik, the Reuters journalist, articulated the question that almost everyone in Islamabad seems to have: "What is the government's strategy?"

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/a-crisis-for-minorities-in-pakistan>





REUTERS

## PAKISTAN'S AHMADI COMMUNITY FACES GROWING DISCRIMINATION, REPORT SAYS

[Saad Sayeed](#)

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) - Pakistan's Ahmadi community faces growing institutionalised discrimination fanned by last year's election campaign by Prime Minister Imran Khan, the minority movement said in a report issued on Monday.

Ahmadis, a group that originated in British-controlled India in the 19th century who see themselves as an Islamic movement, are regarded as heretical by orthodox Muslims and forbidden from calling themselves Muslims or using Islamic symbols in their religious practices.

They face discrimination and violence over accusations their faith insults Islam and community leaders say legislative moves in 2018 and anti-Ahmadi rhetoric during the elections have entrenched legalised hate.

"Ahmadis have no religious freedoms in Pakistan and recent actions taken by the authorities mean that the situation is going to deteriorate even further and make it impossible for Ahmadis to carry on with their everyday lives," spokesman Saleem ud Din said in a statement.

Religious discrimination has long been a problem in Pakistan, a mainly Sunni Muslim state of more than 200 million people, with attacks against Shi'ites, Christians, Hindus and Sikhs in recent years.

Ahmadis have faced particular pressure since a 1974 constitutional amendment which declared them non-Muslim and a ruling a decade later by military ruler General Zia ul Haq explicitly forbidding them from calling themselves Muslim.

Two major events underlined in the report are a High Court verdict requiring citizens to declare their religion when applying for identity documents, which rights activists said specifically targeted the Ahmadi community.

The other was electioneering by Pakistan's main parties, including the prime minister's party, in which they have supported religious laws and anti-Ahmadi groups to curry favour with the religious right.

The Ahmadi community, in a statement on the report, accused Khan of fanning "the flames of religious hatred against Ahmadis".

Khan's office did not respond to request for comment.



The Ahmadis consider themselves Muslims. But their recognition of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who founded the sect in 1889, as a “subordinate prophet” is viewed by many Sunnis as a breach of the Islamic tenet that the Prophet Mohammad was God’s last direct messenger.

The report said 62 Ahmadis were booked under discriminatory religious laws in 2017 and that more than 2,500 anti-Ahmadi news items appeared in Pakistan’s Urdu-language newspapers.

In May, a mob attacked a 100-year-old Ahmadi mosque in eastern Pakistan, spurred by the words of a cleric.

“It is not just extremists who carry out hate campaigns against Ahmadis, but the political class also fans these flames too,” Din added.

(This story has been refilled to correct paragraph 4 spokesman’s name to Saleem ud Din)

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-pakistan-ahmadis/pakistans-ahmadi-community-faces-growing-discrimination-report-says-idUKKCN1SC0RJ>



## **AHMADIS MADE TO FEEL LIKE OUTLAWS IN PAKISTAN**

Ethnic minority fears for safety as Islamist sect seeks its destruction, legislation amended to rub out its achievements

Kamran Chaudhry, Rabwah Pakistan  
March 5, 2019

Muhammad Usman must travel to Rabwah city in Pakistan's Punjab province every month so that his father can receive treatment for his ailing heart.

"His valves were damaged after he had a heart attack last September. But we can't find the kind of healthcare facilities or machines he needs at our local hospitals," the Sunni Muslim told ucanews.com.

On doctors' recommendations, the software engineer admitted his elderly father to the Tahir Heart Institute, an Ahmadi-sponsored hospital in Rabwah, 45 kilometers from his hometown Sargodha.



"The heart specialist charges just 280 rupees [US\$2] per visit. The prescription drugs also cost about 50 percent less than what we would pay elsewhere," he said.

Usman decided to take his father to the Ahmadi hospital despite the stigma he knew this could potentially generate among mainstream Muslim neighbors who regard the Ahmadi as pariahs and heretics.



Ahmadi sect residents visit a cemetery at Rabwah in Chiniot district of Punjab province in Pakistan in this March 2017 file photo. (Photo by Arif Ali/AFP)

Pakistan's [5-million-strong Ahmadi community](#) faces many challenges and persecution at the hands of majority Sunni Muslims and a legal system that protects Sunni interests, they claim.

Activists say they are punished for their belief system, which posits sect founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet and Masih Maud as the promised Messiah, or a metaphorical second coming of Jesus. This is considered heresy in mainstream society.

As a result, former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto declared them non-Muslims via a constitutional amendment in 1974, one year into his four-year term of office, after he had already served as president for nearly two years.

Zia-ul-Haq, a four-star general who served as the nation's sixth president from 1978-88, followed up on this by promulgating an ordinance that made it a punishable offense for Ahmadis to practice Islam.



From April 1984 to the end of the last year, statistics show that 265 Ahmadis were killed in Pakistan, with 386 assaulted for their faith, and around 100 Ahmadiyya places of worship demolished, sealed, set on fire or forcibly occupied.

At least 69 have been denied burial in common cemeteries while the families of 39 deceased Ahmadis have had to watch their loved ones' remains disinterred due to disputes.

Meanwhile, the government of Punjab has banned the written works of the sect's founder and prohibited the publishing of the Quran or any of its translated versions by Ahmadis.

Moreover, Ahmadis are not allowed to hold open-air rallies, conferences or sports events in [Rabwah, the sect's headquarters in the country](#). The ban has been in place for 35 years.

Pouring fuel on the fire, about 35 members of the municipal committee of Sialkot city in Punjab demolished a house of great historical significance to members of the Ahmadi community all over the world last year.

Later, a mob of 600 men demolished a nearby Ahmadi place of worship.

### **The sanctuary**

An Islamist religious sect called the Movement of the Finality of Prophethood (Tehreek Tahafuz e Khatme Nabuwat) has been openly calling for its adherents to attack Ahmadis.

This, coupled with the assassination of visiting Canadian-American cardiologist Mehdi Ali Qamar in Rabwah in 2014, led the Tahir Heart Institute to beef up its security.

The broader Ahmadi community has also adopted protective measures as they also fear for their safety.

"Day patients must now use the hospital's heavily guarded back entrance," said Amir Mehmood, who handles communications for the sect.

"The staff never mention which town the patients come from, when they speak by phone, because we want the doctors to treat them without any fear of reprisal."

Mehmood said Ahmadi doctors from around the world volunteer their services at various hospitals, including the heart institute in Rabwah, for more than a month at a time, and at their own expense.

He said the medical practitioner who was slain in 2018 had been on a mercy mission at the time.

In lieu of a government-run health facility, the Tahir Institute is one of two hospitals in the city managed by Ahmadis. The community also sponsors eight schools and two universities there.



"Five of our educational institutes, including a university, have remained in the hands of provincial authorities since 1972, when the government nationalized all schools and colleges run by religious minorities in Punjab and Sindh," Mehmood said.

"Most of the church-run schools were returned between 1985 and 1995. But we were never able to wrest back control of ours, despite the fact we still pay 10 million rupees [US\$140,000] a year in school expenses.

"And no bishops have ever visited our town, either Catholic or Protestant."

To avoid pejorative terms like *marzai* — a slur that plays on the rank of nobleman or prince — or *qadiani* — a reference to Qadian, birthplace of the "prophet" Ahmad — Ahmadi students who attend universities outside Rabwah generally prefer to hide their faith.

But they can still be identified by fairly easy giveaways, such as sticker slogans on their notebooks that read "Love for All, Hatred for None," meaning they still run the risk of being targeted because of their faith.

Qadian is located in Gurdaspur district of the Indian-controlled side of Punjab, where the sect was first established in 1889.

However, Rabwah, which sits on the banks of the Chenab River, is now considered a sanctuary for Pakistani Ahmadis.

Police guards and young Ahmadi volunteers protect the 70 or so places of worship for their faith in the city.

[Forbidden from using loudspeakers to announce calls to prayer](#), known as Azaan, locals strike stones on nearby electric poles to attract their respective congregations.

### **Misconceptions**

Despite being on opposite sides of the Indo-Pakistan border, Qadian and Rabwah hold a shared belief in the Bahishti Maqbara, or "heavenly graveyard."

"They refer to the burial ground for tithe givers as 'heaven'. The neighboring graveyard for other members of our community is mocked as being hell. They say we take soil from Bahishti Maqbara and put it in the food we cook for other people. One woman even asked me if we eat cats," said Mehmood.

Saleem-ud-din, a community spokesperson, said he has no faith in the new government of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. The minority community has been boycotting polls over a separate electoral list that requires them to register as "non-Muslim" voters.

"We had high hopes when Khan added Dr. Atif Mian, a member of the Ahmadi faith, to his Economic Advisory Council," he said.



"But due to adverse pressure from clerics and their supporters, Khan made his first U-turn less than a month after becoming premier and [dismissed the Princeton University professor](#).

"Ours is a tale of tyranny. None of our nation's leaders have the integrity to challenge the hate literature and hate speech directed at Ahmadis. We have been victims of state-sponsored religious intolerance for as long as I can remember. An impartial political system is the only solution."

Last year, the National Assembly passed a resolution to [drop the name of the country's first Nobel laureate](#), nuclear physicist Abdus Salam, from a top Islamabad university due to his Ahmadi faith. Quaid-e-Azam University had formerly named its physics department after Salam, the most respected scientist the country has ever produced.

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/ahmadis-made-to-feel-like-outlaws-in-pakistan/84586>



## WHY ARE PAKISTAN'S CHRISTIANS TARGETED?

30 October 2018

**Pakistan's Christians, like other religious minorities in the country, have been the target of escalating attacks in recent years.**

The attacks, on their residential areas and places of worship, have mostly been motivated by the country's controversial blasphemy laws.

But there have also been political motives.

The BBC's M Ilyas Khan explains more about the community and why it is being targeted.

### **How many Christians are there in Pakistan?**

Pakistan is overwhelmingly Muslim but Christians and Hindus make up the largest minority groups, with each representing about 1.6% of the population.





Image copyrightAFP/GETTY IMAGES  
Image captionLahore is one of several cities with a significant Christian population

The southern metropolis of Karachi has a large Christian population, as do the cities of Lahore and Faisalabad.



Image copyrightAFP/GETTY IMAGES  
Image captionBesides Karachi, other cities like Lahore, Faisalabad and Peshawar also have Christian populations

There are countless Christian villages in the Punjab heartland, while there is also a sizeable population in the deeply conservative north-western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, particularly in Peshawar city.

Before the partition of India, what is now Pakistan was a much more diverse place but tolerance has declined as society has become increasingly Islamicised and more homogenous.

Minorities used to make up 15% of the population in these cities. Now they account for less than 4%.

### **Are they an influential group?**

The majority of Pakistan's Christians are descended from low-caste Hindus who converted during the British Raj - partly to escape the caste system.



Image copyrightAFP/GETTY IMAGES  
Image captionReligious minorities including Christians have been increasingly targeted amid the growing Islamicisation of Pakistan

Many provided labour in garrison towns. In fact, to this day, every cantonment city in Pakistan has an area known as Lal Kurti, which is traditionally where the Christians reside.

But Christian communities remain among the poorest sections of society and often still do menial jobs. Entire villages in parts of Punjab are Christian and their inhabitants work as labourers and farmhands.

However, there are sections of the Christian community that are more well off. Better educated and mainly settled in Karachi, they came over from Goa during the British Raj.

What all of them share, though, is a sense of vulnerability. This has seen a number of wealthier Christians leaving Pakistan to settle in countries like Canada and Australia as they feel the climate of intolerance in the country has become unbearable.

### **Why are they being attacked?**

Muslims and Christians mostly co-exist amiably enough without frequent outbreaks of animosity.

But **accusations of blasphemy** have also often led to mob violence against Christians, while militant Islamists have also targeted the community.



Image copyrightAFP/GETTY IMAGES  
Image captionChristians mounted anti-Taliban protests following the 2013 Peshawar bomb attacks

Recent attacks include:

- **An attack on a church** in Quetta in December 2017 that killed nine people and injured 57
- **A suicide attack targeting Christians** celebrating Easter at a Lahore playground in March 2016 left 70 dead and more than 340 wounded
- **Two bomb blasts at churches** in Lahore in March 2015 killed 14 and hurt more than 70 people
- A twin suicide bomb attack at a **Peshawar church in 2013** left around 80 dead
- In 2009, nearly 40 houses and a church were burnt by a mob in **Gojra town in Punjab**, with eight people burnt alive

- In 2005, hundreds fled their homes in Faisalabad as churches and Christian schools were set on fire by a mob, after a resident was blamed for burning pages of the Koran

Since the 1990s, scores of Christians have also been convicted of "desecrating the Koran" or "blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad", although experts say most accusations are fuelled by personal disputes.

While most were handed death sentences by lower courts, those sentences were often set aside by higher courts due to lack of evidence or because the complainants were found to be targeting the community for economic benefits.

In 2012, **a Christian girl, Rimsha Masih**, became the first non-Muslim to be acquitted in a blasphemy case when it was discovered she had been framed by a local Muslim cleric.



Image copyrightAFP/GETTYImage captionMany Islamists saw Qadri as a martyr and protested against his execution

Perhaps the best known example is that of **Asia Bibi**, a Christian woman from a Punjab village who in 2010 got into an altercation with some Muslim women and was later accused by them of having blasphemed.

Salman Taseer, the then governor of Punjab who stated that Pakistan's strict blasphemy law had been abused in the case, was later **murdered by his Islamist bodyguard**, Mumtaz Qadri.

Qadri was found guilty and executed in February 2016, prompting **mass protests**.

Pakistan's minister for minority affairs and a Christian leader, **Shahbaz Bhatti**, was assassinated in 2011 by the Taliban for speaking out against the law.

## Are there any other reasons?



Image

copyrightAFP/Getty Images  
Image caption Many Christians are among the poorest in Pakistani society

Some of the violence is directly related to the American-led war in Afghanistan, so it has an expressly political motive.

Months after the US-led coalition attacked Afghanistan in late 2001, a **grenade attack on a chapel** inside a Christian mission hospital in Taxila city killed four people.

A couple of months later, gunmen executed six workers of a Christian charity in their Karachi office. These incidents, although isolated, have continued through the years.

Attacks on Pakistan's Christian and Hindu minorities could be part of a militant plan to send a message to the West or embarrass the country's civilian governments when they appear to be too friendly to the West.

This may also be a strategy by the country's powerful military which is known to have protected Islamist militants operating in Afghanistan and India, and has **supported anti-blasphemy vigilante groups in the past.**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35910331>



## PAKISTANI MINORITIES: KIDNAPPINGS COVERED UP BY RELIGIOUS CONVERSION, MARRIAGE

By Ayesha Tanzeem

March 26, 2019 03:55 PM



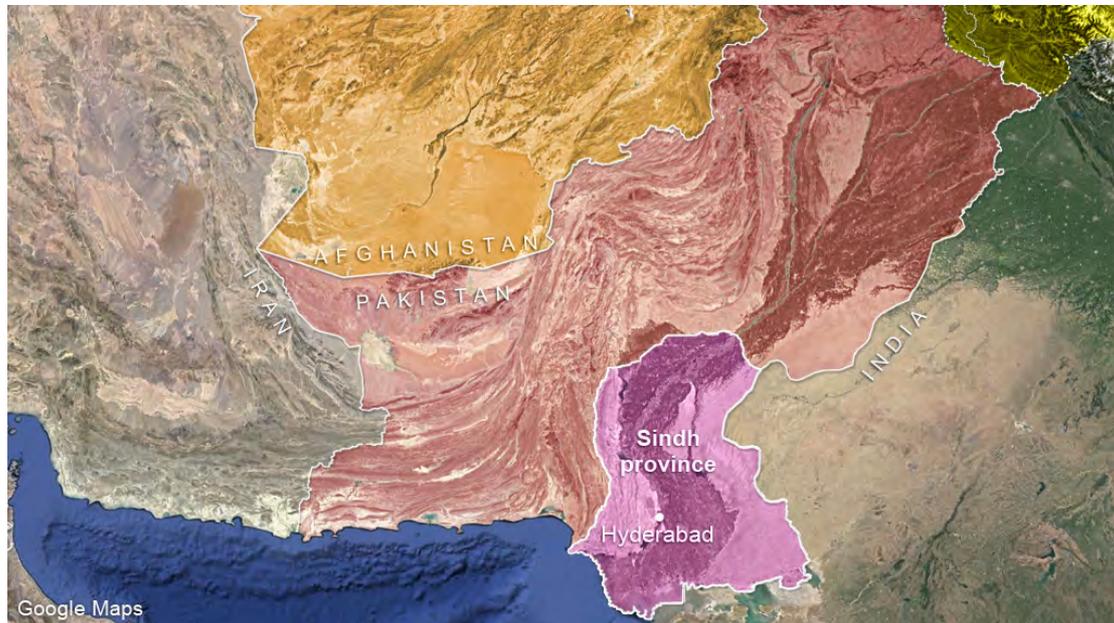
Pakistani civil society activists call for protection of Hindu girls at a protest in Hyderabad, Pakistan, March 26, 2019. A court in Islamabad has ordered protection for two teenage sisters from the minority Hindu community as investigators widen a p

ISLAMABAD - A judge in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, placed two Hindu girls, allegedly under the age of 18, in government custody Tuesday and ordered a "fair and transparent inquiry" into their circumstances that is to be presented to the court in a week.

The girls, Reena and Raveena, were allegedly forced to convert to Islam and marry Muslim men. Their family filed a police report saying they had been kidnapped from Ghotki in Sindh province, where a majority of Pakistan's Hindus live.

But the girls filed a court petition saying they were over 18 and had willingly converted to Islam and married the men they wanted. They also sought protection from their family, claiming the family had harassed and threatened them.

The case has once again brought to the forefront the longstanding complaint in Pakistan's Hindu community that minor girls were being kidnapped, and that conversion and marriage were being used as legal cover to protect the abductors. The community also claimed the girls were threatened with harm to themselves or their family members to give false statements in court.



### Sindh province, Pakistan, and the Afghan-Pakistan

While the Hindu community has the largest number of such complaints, other minorities have faced the same issue. Last month, a Christian woman in the Punjab province reported that her 13-year-old daughter was kidnapped from her home by several men. Her abductors claimed she had converted to Islam and was married to one of them.

Mohammad Sarfaraz Khan Aibak, the police officer conducting the inquiry, told VOA the girl had given an affidavit in court that she was 18 and knew what she was doing. He also said the girl "refused to take a medical examination" to determine her age and could not be forced to take one against her will.

Abiak claimed the family did not have a birth certificate. But the family's lawyer, Lazar Allahrakha, shared with VOA the copy of a church certificate called a "dedication certificate," often used by the country's Christian community in lieu of a birth certificate. He also shared a copy of a school certificate. According to both documents, the girl was born in 2005.

### Pakistan law

Human rights lawyer Asad Jamal said even if a girl was a minor, under Pakistani law, marriage to an underage person could not be invalidated if she claimed she had done it willingly.

"The girl's statement is very important in such cases," he said.



Minority communities complain that minor girls should not be allowed to make such life-altering decisions.

"They are innocent. They don't know anything at this age," said Kheal Das Kohistani, a Hindu member of parliament from Sindh.

In addition, Kohistani said, there was no way to determine whether the girls were giving their statements under pressure unless they were taken away from the men who had allegedly abducted them.

"They should be kept in a shelter home for 15 to 20 days, and their parents should be allowed to meet them," he said.

VOA's own investigation in Sindh province two years ago showed that not all cases involved kidnapping or use of force. Some minor girls eloped with Muslim men against their family's wishes and changed their religion since marriage between a Muslim and a Hindu is not allowed in Islam. The parents often claimed kidnapping, since local police were unlikely to take action if it was determined the girls left willingly.

### **Authorities Investigate Cases of Forced Conversion of Sikh Minority in Pakistan**

However, rights activists say taking a girl under 16 away from her legal guardians is illegal under any circumstances.

"The law says that if a girl is under 16, if she is taken away from her legal guardians even through enticement, whether you've made her believe she is in love or lured her away any which way, the law considers it kidnapping. It does not necessarily have to be use of force," said Jibran Nasir, a human rights lawyer who follows these cases closely.

Pakistan's law also says a girl under 16 cannot consent to sex. "So, if you had consensual sex with someone under 16, that is still considered rape," Nasir said.

Pir Mohammad Ayub Jan Sarhandi is one of two Muslim clerics in Sindh province the Hindu community blames for most of the conversions and marriages. He told VOA that he always ensured a young girl was making her decision freely without any pressure, but said he did not agree with the legal age for marriage.

"They say a girl is not mature till she is 18. We condemn this law. We do not accept it. We will never accept it," he said.

Several Pakistani clerics believe a girl is ready for marriage with her first menstrual cycle.

Reena and Raveena

The Sindh government took notice of Reena and Raveena's case when a video went viral of their father helplessly beating himself outside a police station and asking people to shoot him.



Seven people have been taken into custody for their alleged involvement in the marriages, including members of the husbands' families and the man who performed the marriage ceremony.

Prime Minister Imran Khan also ordered an inquiry, which Kohistani said was a good first step but not enough.

"He should come in the parliament and help make a law against it. That is what will give them instant relief," he said.

<https://www.voanews.com/south-central-asia/pakistani-minorities-kidnappings-covered-religious-conversion-marriage>

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## HOW PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTION FACILITATES BLASPHEMY LYNCHING AND FORCED CONVERSIONS

Islamic supremacy, sadly, is written into Pakistan's constitution.



By [Kunwar Khuldune Shahid](#) March 27, 2019

Over the past week, a student in Bahawalpur [killed his teacher over blasphemy](#) and two Hindu minor girls from Ghotki were [kidnapped and forcibly converted to Islam](#) before being married off. [Blasphemy linked vigilante violence](#) and [forced conversion of Hindu girls](#) not only prevail in Pakistan, but the perpetrators of these two atrocities usually enjoy complete immunity. That's because these acts of persecution and violence are rooted in an idea that the state has failed to curtail, but instead propagated: Islamist supremacy.

According to a Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [report](#), over 1,000 non-Muslim girls are forcibly converted to Islam every year. Meanwhile, over 4,000 blasphemy cases have been registered since 1986, with [at least 75 people](#) being extrajudicially killed over accusations of insulting Islam since 1986 – the year Sections 295-B and 295-C were added to the Pakistan Penal Code, which sanctioned the death penalty for blasphemy.

Both blasphemy lynching and forced conversion are rooted in the Islamist clauses [etched in the Pakistani Constitution](#). These range from the [preamble](#) naming



the country an “Islamic” republic and granting sovereignty to Islamic scriptures to upholding violent penalties for [breaching Islamic injunctions](#).

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Supremacism of any form can eventually evolve into a rallying call for violence against “the others,” with this month’s [Christchurch terror attack](#) being a gory manifestation of white supremacist militancy. Similarly, violence often is a corollary of religious supremacism, as exhibited by the [Hindutva surge](#) in India and the [radical Buddhists in Myanmar](#).

These aforementioned forms of ideological violence flourish despite the lack of legal sanction provided to them. That’s where Islamist legislation in Pakistan, and a few [other Muslim countries](#), further adds to the vicious inertia by violently penalizing any Sharia violations.

Little wonder that the student who killed his professor for “speaking against Islam” [expressed no remorse](#). The murderer’s interpretation of blasphemy in this case was the professor organizing a party with intermingling of male and female students.

When [outraging “religious feelings”](#) of only Muslims carries the death penalty, not only does it intrinsically subjugate other religions, but the intangibility and unquantifiability of the crime leaves it open to Islamist vigilantes.

Furthermore, in Pakistan’s case – unlike Saudi Arabia and Iran for instance – the fact that the state [hasn’t judicially executed anyone for blasphemy](#) further encourages mobs and vigilantes to take matters in their own hands. That is precisely what the Bahawalpur murderer [said](#): He accused the state of “freeing the blasphemers,” referring to the [acquittal of Christian woman Asia Bibi](#) last year.

The blasphemy law acts as a menacing deterrent in forced conversion cases as well, given that objections to “embracing Islam” can be similarly deemed sacrilegious. Furthermore, even though most of the forced conversions are child marriage cases, the state’s reluctance to act is also rooted in the fact that [16 years remains the marriageable age](#) for girls in many parts of the country.

Not only do Islamist groups become the biggest hindrance in legislation against child marriages and the [upholding of women’s rights](#), attempts to ban minors’ religious conversion have similarly been shot down as “[blasphemous](#).” Of course, any conversions in the country are one-way, for [Pakistan is one of 13 Muslim states](#) where leaving Islam, or apostasy, is punishable by death. The Islamist groups regularly cite the [Sharia clauses](#) in the Pakistani Constitution to shoot down any legislation that contradicts the narrowest interpretation of Islam.

Similarly, the ideological roots of forced conversions – most of which involve Hindu girls – can be traced to Islamic supremacism, branches of which self-manifest in



the [anti-Hindu bigotry](#) etched in Pakistani curricula and mainstream narrative with the [much-needed educational reforms](#) yet to be carried out by the state.

Furthermore, given that most of these cases take place Sindh, the only Pakistani province that has established [18 as the marriageable age](#), even the limited action that is taken to counter the forced conversion and marriages is taken in light of Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act. That allows the state to shelve these cases as child marriages alone, ridding itself of any responsibility toward protecting the forced conversions of religious minorities.

Earlier this month the government took the [historic decision](#) of sacking a minister for exhibiting anti-Hindu bigotry. [Arrests](#) have also been made in the Ghotki sisters' case, further hinting at the state's intent to right its wrongs from the past.

Even so, any long-lasting change would need reforms in Pakistan's Islamist laws. Because as long as a state upholds one religious community over the rest and imposes that majority religion's laws on all of its citizens, it can neither truly safeguard the rights of its minorities [nor can it claim to be a democracy](#).

Blasphemy lynching and forced conversions can only be curtailed by upholding human rights and ensuring that the civic law supersedes religious law. That, in turn, is only possible through secularization of the constitution.

<https://thediomat.com/2019/03/how-pakistans-constitution-facilitates-blasphemy-lynching-and-forced-conversions/>



## ANOTHER FORCED CONVERSION IN PAKISTAN'S SINDH

16-year old Hindu girl forced into marriage with a Muslim in Tharparka

Published: January 23, 2019 18:00. [Zubair Qureshi, Correspondent](#)

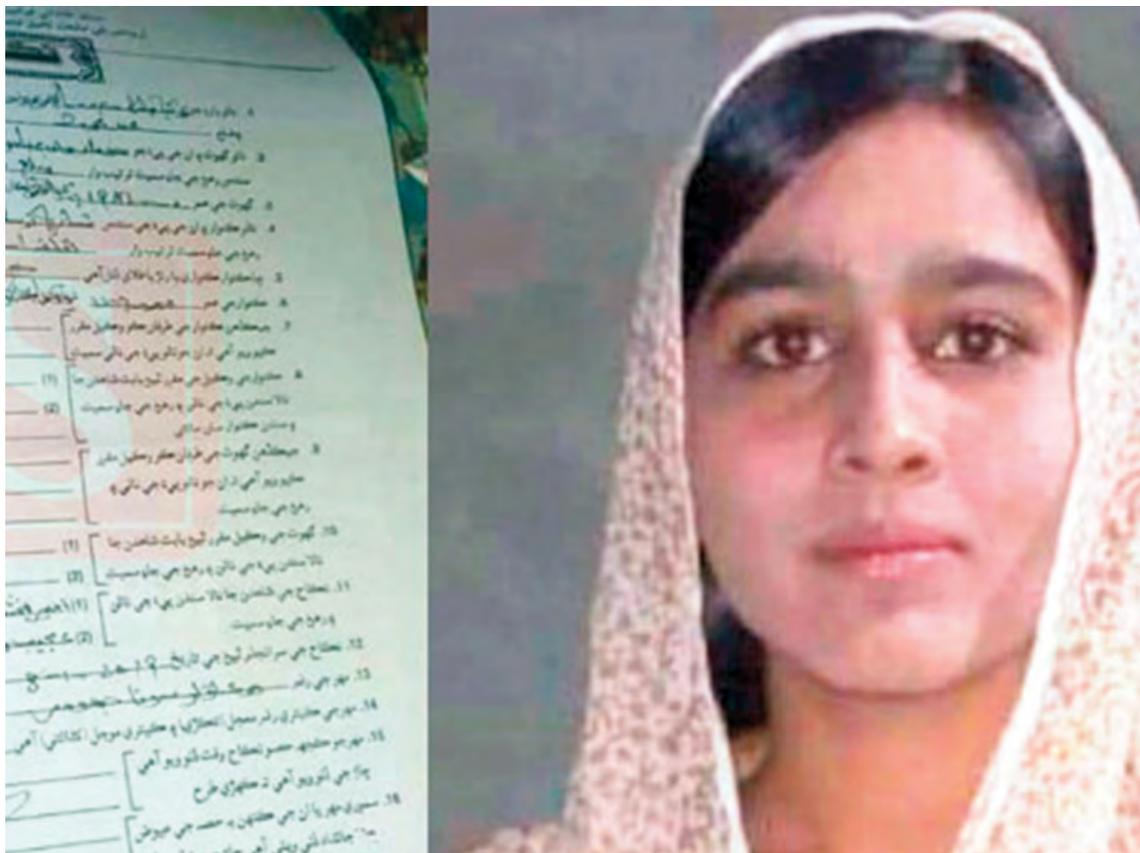
ISLAMABAD: Only days before the general election of 2018, Prime Minister Imran Khan had promised the nation that if he came to power, he would do all he could to prevent forced conversions/marriages of Hindu girls.

However, another Hindu girl has been reportedly converted and taken into marriage by a Muslim man in Thar (Sindh).



According to sources, a 16-year old Hindu girl Anusha Kumari, belonging to Meghwar caste and a resident of Salam Kot in Tharparkar District, has been forced into marriage after her 'conversion' to Islam last week.

The girl, according to reports, had been trapped by a Muslim man of the same locality who enjoys support of the local Muslim clergy.



The 16-year old Hindu girl Anusha Kumari has been forced into marriage after her 'conversion' to Islam last week. Image Credit: AP

Complaints and cases of forced conversions of Hindu girls are being reported on a regular basis and most of such cases are reported in Sindh's Tharparkar district where 80 per cent of the population belongs to the Hindu faith.

Neither the federal government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) nor the provincial government headed by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have taken any steps to stop such incidents and legislate on the matter in the national and Sindh assemblies.

Kapil Dev, a human rights activist and member of the Hindu community from Tharparkar, told *Gulf News* that Anusha Kumari's forced marriage has once again conveyed a message to the Hindu community of the area that their children were not safe in Pakistan and they had taken a wrong decision in 1947 to stay in Sindh.

Kumari's case has not only dented the cause of religious harmony but has also violated the Sindh government's Child Marriage Restraint Act of 2013 that bars marriage of girls below the age of 18, Kapil said.

Kumari's birth registration form, school certificate and other documents all reveal she was born in 2002 and took admission in school in 2007.

When asked what if she herself has taken the decision to embrace Islam and marry a Muslim man, Kapil said, "How can you expect from a girl who is merely 16 to take a decision that would affect her entire life? Besides, even if she has taken this decision of her own will, she will have to wait for two more years as marriage of a person below 18 is not permissible in Sindh."

Kapil said the only solution to such cases of forced conversions lies in legislation. The PPP government in its last tenure had worked on the bill and was to table it in the assembly but the PPP co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari intervened and withdrew it in the last moment.

According to him, the draft bill was withdrawn seemingly under the pressure of the religious forces. "It is ironic that a House of 171 members was taken hostage to a handful of religious zealots who don't even have a representation in the Assembly, Kapil lamented.

Imran Khan's ex-wife Reham Khan has also condemned the forced conversion of the Hindu girl. On her twitter page, Khan posted, "Another case of a Hindu female child forcefully converted & married off. Disgusting but there will be no action as politics comes first for all players."

According to a report by the 'Movement for Solidarity and Peace' in Pakistan, an estimated 1,000 Christian and Hindu women are forced to convert and marry Muslim men every year.

<https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/another-forced-conversion-in-pakistans-sindh-1.61620767>

## Business Standard

### 13-YEAR-OLD HINDU GIRL RAPED IN PAK

Press Trust of India | Karachi Last Updated at June 8, 2019 21:40 IST

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A 13-year-old Hindu girl has been allegedly raped by two men after forcing her to drink liquor in Pakistan's [Sindh](#) province, [media reports](#) said on Saturday.

The incident happened in [Tando Muhammad Khan](#) district on June 7 while the victim was on her way to purchase some groceries and in between the two suspects called her towards them and forced her to drink liquor after which they rape her, [the Dawn](#) newspaper reported.



After the victim did not return home, her father and brother went out looking for her. Later they found her in an unconscious state in a local ground near a sugar mill, the paper said quoting the FIR registered by the victim's father.

We found her in an open plot near a sugar mill and she was in a bad state. We rushed her to hospital and reported the matter to the police, the victim's father said.

After initial investigation, the police has arrested two suspects for their involvement in the alleged sexual assault.

They were remanded into police custody for four days by a local court in Tando [Mohammad Khan](#) on Saturday.

The victim who narrated her ordeal after regaining consciousness underwent a medical test at the civil hospital in [Hyderabad](#) where doctors confirmed that "sexual intercourse has taken place".

A medical examination of [the Hindu](#) girl has revealed evidence of rape, which is now being sent to the laboratory for a final report, another newspaper the Express Tribune quoted Dr [Maqbol Mallah](#) of the [District Health Office](#) as saying.

Tando [Mohammad Khan](#) SSP [Zulfiqar Talpur](#) said that the DNA samples of the girl and the two suspects have been taken for further investigation.

[Adviser](#) to [Sindh](#) Chief Minister on Information Murtaza Wahab said that the culprits involved in the teenage girl's rape will be brought to justice.

He said that the [provincial government](#) had received the initial police inquiry report on the matter.

*(This story has not been edited by Business Standard staff and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)*

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/13-year-old-hindu-girl-raped-in-pak-119060800817\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/13-year-old-hindu-girl-raped-in-pak-119060800817_1.html)





## UNITED NATIONS



### Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.



## PAKISTAN



### Article 20

Freedom to profess religion and to manage religious institutions. — Subject to law, public order and morality-

(a) every citizen shall have the right to profess, practise and propagate his religion; and

(b) every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.

Nasim Malik ( *International Human Rights Commission Sweden* )  
[www.eurotimesbelgium.be](http://www.eurotimesbelgium.be)

*A compilation by*

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