



INCIDENT REPORT

AHMADIS IN ALGERIA VICTIMS OF OPPRESSION, HARRASSEMENT, PERSECUTION AND UNLAWFUL IMPRISONMENT

Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Algeria, have been persecuted and harassed particularly in the past few years. Recently, the Government has embarked on raiding the residences and meeting places of the Community and picking up the members accusing them of blasphemy, contempt of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him.

The Government has also accused Ahmadis of organising terrorist activities particularly in stadiums and sports grounds.

By way of background, the persecution of Ahmadis in Algeria took a nasty turn in 2009 when the Muslim Television Ahmadiyya started a dedicated channel for the Arabic speaking people. The channel became very popular among the locals. After the 1990 episode of terrorism in the country, the public was keen to seek the Islam which promoted tolerance and respect of all religions.

The Ahmadiyya Community in Algeria always had the reputation of being a peace-loving Community, cooperating with the Police and other law enforcing agencies to extinct terrorism and restore peace.

In 2016, the Government supported a campaign of hate mongering against Ahmadis in the media and the Officials of the Ministry of Religious Affairs started arresting and harassing Ahmadis. The local Clerics fabricated and filed blasphemy cases against more than 280 Ahmadis and 36 Ahmadis were imprisoned for several months. The Community was also subjected to fines which amounted to over 100,000 US Dollars and still remain to be paid.

Many cases are still in the High Court awaiting hearing. In some towns, Ahmadis are forbidden to go anywhere and that has caused some to suffer from such conditions as depression and mental breakdown.

Under all these atrocities, members of the Ahmadiyya Community in Algeria have remained calm. They have always observed the laws, rules and regulations of the country and have never protested or raised any disturbance. Those still in prison are treated despicably and others are ominously under threat and although they are Nationals of Algeria and have never acted against the laws of the country, they are treated brutally, discriminated and deprived of freedom of religion, faith and practise and socially maligned.

Earlier this month, the Government of Algeria handed down 2-year prison sentences for Ahmadis in Constantine. In Khanshala, Ahmadis have not been allowed to leave their town since 2017, which has led one member to suffer severe mental health issues. On 8 October 2020 the Government of Algeria announced a 2-year prison sentences for its National President and Other members.

We fervently appeal to all the international, regional and national human rights organisations and the stalwarts of freedom of religion to take serious notice of these atrocities against the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Algeria and urge the Government of Algeria to respect the International codes of conduct and the dignity of all its citizens and protect their freedom of religion and fundamental human rights. We request that you:

1. Express concern to the Algerian Embassy over renewed persecution of Ahmadi Muslims, calling on Algeria to release detained Ahmadis, overturn prison sentences, drop cases, and cancel fines.
2. Engage with Foreign Offices to put pressure on Algeria to release Ahmadis recently detained without any further legal proceedings.

Yours Sincerely,

Nasim Malik,
General Secretary,
International Human Rights Committee (IHRC)