



## **THE PLIGHT OF PAKISTANI AHMADIS**

Pakistan is continuously claiming that all its religious minorities have equal rights of professing and propagating their religious beliefs and that State is jealousy protecting their lives and properties. As an independent observer, International Human Rights Committee (IHRC) has serious reservations about this claim of Pakistan where religious minorities especially Ahmadi Muslims are facing State sponsored persecution for the last many decades for practicing their faith and now this victimisation has gained an unprecedented impetus.

It seems that all the organs of the State, in apparent connivance with each other are suppressing Ahmadi Muslims with full force in order to appease the religious extremists who want to marginalise the Ahmadi Muslims in every sphere of public life.

A summary of the events of the past one year is sufficient to dispel the impression given by Pakistan.

In last one year, numbers of Ahmadis have been murdered and many have been injured in different incidents across the country. Peshawar, the provincial capital of KP has become the most unsafe place where three renowned Ahmadis were gunned down and no assailant has been apprehended. In the same city a teen-ager killed an accused in the courtroom right in front of the judge by accusing him to be an Ahmadi.

In the province of Punjab numbers of mosques of Ahmadiyya Community have been desecrated by the Punjab Police in the past one year. Minarets of these mosques have been torn down and holy scriptures written on the walls have been erased in disgraceful manner. It would not be possible for us to gauge the feelings of Ahmadis who can only see helplessly the desecration of their Holy places and cannot complain to law enforcers, as they are the ones who are responsible for all these mischievous auctions.

Courts are also not lagging behind in contributing their part in Anti-Ahmadiyya movement. In recent past the Lahore High Court, Lahore has given a verdict that possessing or reading Qur'an or inscribing Kalma (Creed of Islam) inside an Ahmadiyya mosque is an offence punishable with death or imprisonment for life. Many Ahmadis are facing trial of the cases in which they may be awarded death sentence or imprisonment for life. The Cyber

Laws of Pakistan are being used as a tool to persecute Ahmadi Muslims and many Ahmadis are behind bars on allegations of sharing their religious views in cyberspace and there is real apprehension that these cases maybe culminated in convictions and sentence of death and life imprisonment. There is clear documentary evidence that the High Court as well as the lower courts are denying Ahmadi accused persons right of fair trial and due process due to extreme hatred prevalent in the society against Ahmadis and the pressure of the extremist elements who are behind all these cases.

This is only a glimpse of what the Ahmadis are facing in Pakistan and the real situation is much worse. What Ahmadis are facing and experiencing is hard to be narrated. It is the duty of the world to take all necessary steps to compel Pakistan to fulfill its international commitments towards its minorities including Ahmadis who are facing the wrath of majority not because of any fault on their part but for the fact that majority is not happy with their religious beliefs.