

Human Rights Monitor 2018

A report on the

Religious Minorities in Pakistan

Covering Incidents of 2017



Human Rights Monitor 2018
A report on the

Religious Minorities in Pakistan

Edited by: Ataurehman Saman
Reviewed by: Cecil Shane Chaudhry

This publication is for limited circulation
All Rights Reserved with NCJP

The contents of this publication may be reproduced by any
organization working for promotion of human rights with
acknowledgment

Publisher: National Commission for Justice and Peace
(Pakistan Catholic Bishops' Conference)

Facilitation: His Grace Archbishop
Dr. Joseph Arshad Chairperson NCJP
Fr. Emmanuel Yousaf (Mani)
National Director, NCJP

Printed: May 2018

Design, Layout: *Artwise* (artwiseprinters@gmail.com)

Price: Rs. 100, US\$ 20

Address: (Head Office) E-64/A, St # 8, Officers'
Colony, Walton Road, Lahore-Pakistan

Tel: 0092-42-36668692 – 0092-42-36682840

Fax: 0092-42-36655549

Email: ncjppakistan@gmail.com

Website: www.ncjp-pk.org

ISBN: 978-969-9042-27-0

Content

1.	Social Discrimination	11
2.	Religious Freedom	39
3.	Discriminatory Laws	53
4.	Blasphemy Laws	65
5.	Crimes Against Women	91
6.	Recommendations.....	97
6.	Abbreviations.....	103
7.	Glossary	104

Preface

The alarming increase in incidents of violence based on faith and the discriminatory attitudes of police and administration in the year 2017 suggests that the religious minorities in Pakistan have little to hope for in the year 2018. The decreasing space for religious minorities in all spheres of their lives magnified the sense of being marginalized, vulnerable and helpless. In the wake of shrinking space and diminishing rights of religious minorities in the country, it seems that the white in our flag of Pakistan would no longer reflect the presence of non-Muslim citizens.

In August, a 17 year old Christian student, Sharoon Masih was beaten to death by his classmate over a petty issue. In October a 15 year old Christian student Arslan Masih was beaten to death reportedly by police officers because he got into a fight with one of the police officer's nephew.

In each case these minor disputes resulted in adverse outcomes. The incidents of forcing non-Muslim staffers to either recite verses from the Holy Quran or be marked absent in government-run institutions in Lahore exposed the situation of religious freedom for religious minorities in the country. The policy of recruiting Non-Muslim citizens on only the most menial posts in government departments remained in practice as a continuous biased attitude towards the citizens of minority faith.

Blasphemy laws remained an easy tool to settle personal disputes. However police and law enforcing agencies remained vigilant enough to avoid mob violence. A Christian staff of an International organization in Pakistan was falsely accused of blasphemy in mid-2017, while a Christian Staff nurse was falsely accused of blasphemy by her roommate; however in the both cases, the local administration defused the tensions and settled the matter wisely.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan through its June 19, 2014 judgment directed the government to take steps to ensure the rights to minorities and protection of their places of worship; however the government showed little seriousness to respect the orders of the apex court.

In November 2016, the Sindh Assembly unanimously passed a forced conversion bill known as "Protection of Minorities Bill".

However, in January 2017, the bill was withdrawn on demand from religious parties and groups.

The growing sense of insecurity has resulted into migration of religious minorities from Pakistan. The size of minorities in 1947 was 30% of the total population, which reduced down to 3% in 1998. With the population census having been conducted in 2017 the proportion of religious minorities is further expected to be lower than estimated. A sense of safety and protection can only stop this migration trend. Even small positive steps taken to protect and preserve the rights of religious minorities would save this diminishing religious diversity in the country.

With the general elections due to take place in July 2018, we hope that the political parties will realize the urgent need to mainstream the religious minorities in the political arena and thus hope that they will make an honest effort to give due space by awarding general seats as well as taking steps to eradicate any marginalization within their respective parties and in society.

This year's Human Rights Monitor covers the incidents of 2017 with a hope that the social sections and state institutions would try to work on these issues to change the course of life for the religious minorities in Pakistan. The NCJP team in Lahore expresses its sincere gratitude to His Grace Archbishop Dr. Joseph Arshad (Archbishop of Rawalpindi/Islamabad), Chairperson NCJP and Fr. Emmanuel Yousaf (Mani), the National Director, for their continued support to the commission. We are indebted to Rev. Fr. Bonnie Mendes for his insightful comments, suggestions and untiring support to review this report. Without his guidance and persistent help this report would not have been possible.

I would like to acknowledge the input from a number of NCJP HRDs/Activists on monitoring and fact-finding, staff of NCJP Diocesan Offices in authenticating the information, Mr. Christopher Augustine for compiling the report and Mr. Ataurehman Saman for preparing and editing the content.

Let us hope that our collective efforts will help in supporting the change we in Pakistan so desperately strive for.

Cecil S. Chaudhry
Executive Director

Key Findings of Chapters

Blasphemy Laws:

The situation remained disturbing regarding abuse of blasphemy laws in the year 2017. Any concrete initiative to find a long term remedy in this regard was absolutely missing on part of government. It has been observed that blasphemy laws have been overwhelmingly used to persecute religious minorities and settle personal vendettas.

In April 2017 Mashal Khan a student of Abdul Wali Khan university was lynched by a mob over alleged blasphemy that was later proved a false allegation. According to Joint investigation team, the mob had been incited to attack Mashal who had been vocal about the rights of students in the university.

On August 11, 2017 the Islamabad High court (Justice Shaukat Aziz) asked the government to make changes in the blasphemy laws to stop its misuse for personal interests and fix tougher punishment for any person falsely accusing someone of the crime, which is punishable by death. However there was little done regarding courts order.

Social Discrimination:

On Easter 2017, Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif while extending his heartiest felicitations to the Christians on the Easter eve of 2017 said, “It is a moral and national obligation of our nation to protect the constitutional rights of each and every Christian and all other minorities, living in Pakistan as enshrined in our Constitution,” Anyhow throughout the year marginalization of religious minorities was observed as a common and unchecked phenomena.

Despite protests, policy to recruit persons from religious minorities for the job of sweepers remained intact expressed in the public advertisements published in daily newspapers by different departments of the government.

A hospital administration in Lahore forced its non-Muslim staffers to either recite verses from the Holy Quran at morning assembly or be marked absent for the day. The trickledown effect of the discrimination in constitution, laws and policies can be seen in social behavior of the Muslim citizens

Crimes Against Women

Pakistani society, which still has to recognize women as a full human being is prone to multifaceted crimes against women. Women belonging to minorities face a double jeopardy, leading to gender specific injustices. Sad part of the story is that the state machinery is promoting these crimes rather than addressing the situation.

This issue of human rights monitor reports cases of forced conversion to Islam, forced marriages with Muslims, rape incidents, false cases of theft against domestic workers etc. Abduction and rape of minority women seems to be a trend, while biased reporting has a vital role for crimes happening against the most vulnerable members of minorities particularly women.

Religious Freedom

Pakistan was placed on a special watch list for “severe violations of religious freedom” in the year 2017, that reflects the plight of religious minorities in Pakistan.

Incidents like forcing non-Muslim staffers to recite verses from Holy Quran, forced conversion to Islam, attacks on places of worship were reported in this period. Many religious minorities, especially the Ahmaddiya community, are unable to practice their religion, both in public and private.

There was least done to ensure the religious freedom of religious minorities.



SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Legal frame work of non-discrimination

Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

No one shall be subject to coercion, which impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any state, institution, group of persons on the grounds of religion or other beliefs.

Article 1(2) and 2 (1)

Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic minorities

Persons belonging to minorities may exercise their rights including those set forth in the present declaration, individually as well as in community with other members of their group, without any discrimination. **Article 3 (1)**

Constitution of Pakistan

Provision as to Property

Every citizen shall have the rights to acquire, hold and dispose off property in any part of Pakistan, subject to the constitution and reasonable restriction imposed by law in the public interest. **Article 23**

Parochial and other similar prejudices to be discouraged

The state shall discourage parochial, racial, tribal, sectarian and provincial prejudices among the citizens. **Article 33**

Protection of minorities

The state shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their due representation in the federal and provincial services. **Article 36**

Definition

Two main International Human Rights Treaties dealing with discriminations, The International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial discrimination, and The Convention on the All forms of Discrimination against Women, define the phenomenon as any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which has purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

Most worrying aspect of the social discrimination and religious intolerance in Pakistan is its institutionalization through various laws and policies. In some cases, the laws sanction religious discrimination directly and in others by implication (see Chapter discriminatory Laws).

Working with these laws for years the administrative machinery has become insensitive to religious parity. This state of affairs raises the risk of incidences of religion- based discrimination and intolerance.

The column for cast' in the revenue and court papers, religion specific legislation in the constitution and laws are examples of explicit discrimination. Making Islamiat Studies a compulsory part of the school curriculum is a recipe for institutionalizing discrimination.

It is also clear that societies cannot liberate themselves without legal safeguards in the state policy. Living in the 21st century, antiquity of discrimination is no excuse for its existence. The religious discrimination is unfortunately embedded in the constitution and legal frame work of Pakistan therefore the successive governments chose to counter the questions by denials. This de-recognition of the issue meant that efforts for improving the situation could not be initiated. Doing away with the policies based on

discrimination is an imperative in order to build a society that accommodates plurality and celebrates its diversity.

Prime Minister assured protection, due rights to minorities

Protecting minorities living in Pakistan is the moral and Constitutional responsibility of the government, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on April 16, 2017.

In his message on Easter, the PM lauded the role of the Christian community for the development of Pakistan. The PM reassured the members of Christian community and all other minorities that Pakistan belonged to them and stressed that the country's peace and prosperity lay in the unity of all Pakistanis. It is a moral and national obligation of our nation to protect the constitutional rights of each and every Christian and all other minorities, living in Pakistan as enshrined in our Constitution, he said. The prime minister extended his heartiest felicitations to the Christian citizens on the occasion of their religious festival, Easter. I wish our Christian brothers and sisters living in Pakistan the happiness and joys of Easter, a press release from the PM Office quoted him as saying. He further noted with appreciation that Pakistani Christians were playing an important role in the progress and development of the country. We deeply appreciate and are indebted to their valuable contributions and services towards our collective national objective of securing a truly strong, progressive and stable Pakistan, he said.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/17-Apr-17/pm-assures-protection-due-rights-to-minorities>

State provokes discrimination

On March 19, 2017 an ad appeared in a local newspaper of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in district Banu for vacant posts of sweepers. The ad stated that religious minorities such as Christians, Hindus and Shias are eligible to apply.

The ad was published by the office of the Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) Banu. Usually, members of religious minorities (Christian, Hindu, Sikh etc) are recruited for such positions.

Shias are a sect of Muslims. They are not considered minority till now so far. However some sections of Muslims consider them as non-Muslims. A social activist Jabran Nasir stated that it reflects that how residents are taught that a certain sect is inferior to the other.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/controversial-ad-in-k-p-newspaper-hurts-religious-sensibilities-of-minorities/>

Sanitary Worker

A Christian sanitary worker died after doctors refused treatment of 'unclean' patient in Umerkot, Sindh

On June 01, 2017, a sanitary worker Irfan Masih, suffocated to death in Umerkot (Sindh). Irfan Masih, fell unconscious along with three other sanitary staff while cleaning a manhole on Chorr road in Umerkot. He died hours later in the government hospital in front of doctors who allegedly refused to treat him because Irfan was drenched in sewage sludge. The other three workers, Faisal Masih, Yaqoob Masih and Shaukat Masih were referred to Hyderabad and later Karachi for medical treatment

According to the brother of Irfan Masih, Irfan and his fellow workers had stepped down into a manhole for a routine inspection where they fainted due to suffocation. All four workers were rushed to Civil Hospital Umerkot. Doctors told the patient's attendants to wash his body before they would begin treatment. According to Parvez (Brother of Irfan), "My brother died during the process of cleansing the filth from his body". The other three were shifted to Karachi for further treatment. Umerkot police registered an FIR against six suspects, including three doctors.



<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1425712/sanitary-worker-dies-doctors-refuse-touch-sludge-covered-body/>

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1336977>

Sanitary worker killed, another injured in Rawalpindi

On August 18, 2017, unidentified assailants shot dead a Christian Karamat Masih and injured another person Sagheer in Rawalpindi. Karamat was an employee of the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC)

According to the Rescue officials, unidentified attackers on a motor bike opened fire on Karamat and Sagheer in Dhok Kashmiran locality on Data Ganj Bakhsh Road early morning of August 18, 2017. Karamat received a bullet in his neck and died on the spot while Sagheer sustained serious injuries receiving bullets in his abdomen and on his left arm. Sagheer was taken to Benazir Hospital while the body of Karamat was shifted to district headquarters hospital for legal formalities.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1485283/sanitary-worker-killed-another-injured-dhok-kashmirian-locality/>

Three Christian sanitary workers died during cleaning by toxic gas

On July 8, 2017, three Christian sanitary workers Saleem Masih (50), Danish Masih (20) and Nadeem Masih (18) died due to suffocation while cleaning a gutter in area of Ara Basti of town Dera Izat Ghari, District Bahawalpur (South Punjab). The sanitary workers had no safety equipment.

Saleem and Danish died on the spot whereas Nadeem breathed his last at Victoria Hospital in the early hours of the next day. They all were residents of servant quarters at Sadiq Public School.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6541>

Iqbal Masih murdered during duty

On November 28, 2016, unidentified assailants gunned down a Christian sanitary worker, Iqbal Masih (43), resident of village targari, Gujranwala, during performing his duties. He had been working in Gujranwala Waste Management Company for last two years.

Rescue team 1122 was called, however he died on the way to hospital. Police registered FIR under section 203 PPC. The department paid all dues of the deceased, however refused to provide legal assistance. **CCJP office, Gujranwala**

Sanitary worker Rehman Wilson deprived of job

A Christian sanitary worker Rehman Wilson resident of village 482/JB tehsil Shorkot district Jhang was denied a job despite being selected on merit. Health department Jhang recruited some staff for the hospital. Rehman Wilson was selected as a sweeper and his name was mentioned in the merit list letter # 2441-E. His documents were sent to education department for confirmation. The officer was reportedly taking bribe for confirmation. Poor Rehman Wilson did not have money to please the officer. Department raised the following objection: a cutting was found in the column of date of birth. The current headmistress told that they had not rewritten on the certificate. On this pretext, the certificate is declared fake. It was blatantly ignored that the certificate was issued on 31/5/2010. The cutting was verified with the signature of the head of the school with the -stamp.

Rehman, in an application (5309/25-9-17) requested Chief Executive Officer Health Authority Jhang (Shahid Saleem), that his documents may be resent for confirmation. Later DHO issued a show cause notice to Rehman on 10-10-17 however the notice was not delivered to him. Rehman approached Fr. Yaqoob (in-charge of the school), who issued a new certificate including a letter verifying that Rehman had been studying in the respective school. When Rehman reached DHO with the verified documents, he was handed over a termination letter. Rehman had no sources to go to court to get justice. **CCJP report, Faisalabad**

Love affairs

Christian villages of Khushab “imperiled” anticipating attack from Muslims

Three Christian villages (village No 36, 37 and 38 in district Khushab) faced threats of a possible attack from local Muslims as tension between Christians and Muslims arose after a Christian boy Sunil eloped with a Muslim girl Saira.

Christian villagers were pressurized to produce the couple back. Muslims reportedly threatened to torch all the churches and abduct Christian girls.

Christian villagers approached the authorities to take action in order to stop any possible sectarian clashes. They appealed to the authorities to provide them protection so that they and their properties are not harmed.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-villages-imperiled-anticipating-attack-from-local-muslims/>

Ansar Masih tortured in Sheikhpura for “befriending” Muslim woman

21 years old young Christian, Ansar Masih, was reportedly assaulted and burnt with hot iron rods, allegedly by the family of a Muslim woman in Sheikhpura district, for having “illicit relations” with her.

The victim received severe burn wounds and after failing to get proper medical care in Sheikhpura, he was shifted to Mayo Hospital, Lahore, on April 16, 2017 for further medical Treatment. Police lodged a case against the father and brothers of the woman, who reportedly tortured Ansar Masih.

On April 1, 2017, Ansar was allegedly kidnapped by the accused and his two sons. They unclothed him, beat him and burnt him using hot iron rods. The FIR further stated that the accused then brought Ansar to his house and told his family that he met with a traffic accident.

Ansar's family then rushed him to Sheikhpura's District Headquarters Hospital where, after gaining consciousness, he narrated the incident. Subsequently, on April 5, his sister lodged the FIR following which the police took the accused into custody.



According to the victim's father, the family was under pressure by the accused as well as the area police to reconcile and take back the case.

When contacted, the officials at DHQ confirmed that Ansar was shifted to Lahore's Mayo Hospital as the facility in Sheikhpura lacked equipment and necessary supplies to treat patients with serious burn injuries. Ansar's condition was reportedly stable at the time of filing this report. However, his medical treatment was underway.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1327428>

Land grabbing

Hindu community told to vacate houses in District Bahawalnagar

Hindu community of Haroonabad district Bahawalnagar area was asked to vacate their houses by local administration. Assistant Commissioner of Tehsil Haroonabad Anjum Zehra issued notices to dozens of Hindu families to vacate their homes by June 28, 2017.

'You people have been living here at Jarnali Sarak (The Grand Trunk Road) illegally for a long time and you were notified on June 13, 2017 that these houses will be vacated because you are illegal occupants of this property. In another case the government property will be vacated with government's force, the notification said.

Society of Hindu Balmiki Mandar (SHBM) president (Haroonabad) Harbans Lal Sultani said that the Hindu families had been living in the area for the last 30 years after the Bahawalnagar Commissioner allowed them to

construct homes on the government's land called 'Jurnaili Murabba' in 1987. "In 1987, the then Bahawalnagar's Commissioner allowed us in writing to settle on the land on an application moved by 69 Hindu families who were employed by local government on contract basis," he added. "The rest of the paper work for allotment of five marlas to each Hindu family was completed in the tenure of Pakistan People's Party in 1995 when a 'misal' (revenue record of land and property) was made in favour of the Hindu families." Sultani said that the members of Hindu community built their houses after allotment of land located in Chak number 72-4/R. However, now the Haroonabad Assistant Commissioner has issued notices to all Hindu families to vacate their homes. He called upon the Federal government and Punjab Chief Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif to direct authorities concerned not to get the land vacated.

<http://nation.com.pk/featured/29-Jun-2017/hindus-of-haroonabad-told-to-vacate-houses>

A Muslim claimed church-devoted property

In Gujranwala City, a Muslim Barkat Ali Shah claimed a property that was devoted for Church, however was not transferred to the Christian community. Barkat Ali registered a case in Civil Court to have the property. To put Christians under-pressure, on September 14, 2017 a fake FIR was registered against local Christians by a family member of Shah named Samina Kausar.

On intervention of CCJP, Gujranwala office, the section of terrorism was excluded from the FIR. The case is under trial.

CCJP office, Gujranwala

Graveyard issues

A Christian MPA of Punjab expressed concern about land grabbers of a Christian cemetery

Punjab MPA Ms. Shunila Ruth visited Chillianwala Christian cemetery, Mandi Bahauddin district in June 2017.

The cemetery is stretched over land measuring 260 Kanals (One Kanal= 5445 sqfeet) and is located in Chillianwala, Mandi Bahauddin district. Most of the graveyard is under illegal

occupation. She said the land mafia had occupied the land with the alleged connivance of local administration. This illegal exercise is not acceptable.

She urged Punjab CM to direct relevant authority to get the graveyard land vacated. She also demanded legal action against those who had occupied the land. She said that she would raise this point in the Punjab Assembly as well in its next session.

Local leaders of Christian community accompanied the MPA during her tour in Mandi Bahauddin district.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6481>

Concern on minority graveyard inundated with drainage water

On July 28, 2017, Pakistan Rights of Hindu Minority Foundation convener Naraindas Soomro expressed grave concern on inundation of minority graveyard in Tando Yousuf (Sindh) with dirty drainage water. In a statement Soomro said Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has failed to drain out gutter and rain water from minority graveyard. He also warned that land grabbers were seeking to occupy the land.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6570>

Land grabbing of a graveyard and Church

On November 11, 2017 Muhammad Jameel and his armed companions forcefully took over the possession of Church and graveyard in village Qaziaan tehsil Shakar Garh district Narowal. Vandals desecrated the Church, smashed the Cross, door and other things. They tied their cattle in the Church. They ploughed over the graves and destroyed everything.

The settlement included 16 Christian families (about 100 people) between two villages Qazian and Rangra. The community built a Church on their own plot. Till some years they used it as a Church. However in 2015 the accused had claimed the ownership of the place. They vandalized the Church and took its possession. The community asked

administration for help. DPO Narowal locked the Church till the decision of the court and sealed the Church.

Update

Christian community is fighting back in the court while on the other hand the accused started work on building that was stopped by police.

CCJP report, Gujranwala

A Muslim made a road for straight path for his home

A Muslim, Qasir Toor, in a village Nawa Pind Cheema, Gujranwala, bulldozed a Christian graveyard to construct a track to his home.

On knowing, Christians complained to the Namberdar (Headman of a village) Ch. Muhammad Ashraf Cheema requesting him to help them to undo the illegitimate occupation.

Cheema called the panchayat (village council) and rebuked Qasir Tool and warned him not to repeat such a conduct.

CCJP Chapter, Gujranwala

Minority Labour

26 Christian bonded laborers rescued from Brick Kiln factory

On May 20, 2017, following the orders from the court, police raided the brick kiln factory at village 4/10.L Harrapa Sahiwal and recovered 26 Christian bonded laborers. Attorney Javed Sahotra argued on behalf of all Christian laborers. After hearing arguments of both counsels, the learned Judge set free all the laborers.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6464>

Religious intolerance

Forcing Christian paramedics to recite verses from the Holy Quran

A hospital administration Mian Mir Hospital Lahore (run by City District Government) reportedly forced its non-Muslim

staffers to either recite verses from the Holy Quran at morning assembly or be marked absent for the day.

The matter came to light when Mian Mir Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Muhammad Sarfraz allegedly slapped a Christian paramedical staffer for not attending the assembly. Following the incident, all paramedical staff protested against the MS and other hospital administration by shutting down all functions of the medical facility. This act of the MS is a violation of the Constitution of Pakistan, commented a Christian paramedical staffer named Marshal.

Talking to the media, he asked religious scholars to sort out the issue as the administration of the hospital was pressurising them to leave their jobs.

Another paramedical staff member of the medical facility, Fahad Ahmed, said both Muslims and Christians were working in harmony. It is professional workplace; I don't know why the administration is forcing our Christian brothers to do this. This is totally unacceptable.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1399501/paramedics-say-christians-forced-attend-hospital-religious-assembly/>

Christian school girl mocked & ordered out of classroom

In May 2017, a Christian girl Sukhraj studying at a school in District Attock (upper Punjab) was told by her Muslim teacher that, if she refused to take a class in Islamic studies, she must leave. The teacher also ordered her Muslim students to avoid eating with the Christian girl because of her faith.

According to Sukhraj, her problems started when she decided to choose Ethics rather than Islamic study. "First, the teacher argued over the textbook of the Ethics class. Then she sent me out of the class as punishment. Later, she told me that if I could not study Islamic education, then why do I study in a Muslim school. She even told me, that,

when she comes into the class, I must leave. "No classmate or any other teacher ever behaved like this, except this teacher," she said.

Sukhraj's uncle, Munir Nasir, tried to raise the matter with the school and local authorities, but was barred from seeing the principal. He also attempted to take up the issue with Attock district coordination officer, explaining that the teacher also told Muslim students not to eat or drink with Sukhraj. "Rather than addressing the matter, Sukhraj was shifted to evening classes," he added. May 24, 2017

<http://www.gospelherald.com/articles/70612/20170524/christian-schoolgirl-who-refused-study-islam-mocked-ordered-out-classroom.htm>

A Christian student beaten to death by class fellow

Sharoon Masih, a class IX student of the Government MC Model High School, Chak # 461/EB, Burewala, died when his class fellow Ahmad Raza punched and thrashed him on August 30, 2017 in the class.

On his very first day at school on August 28, 2017, as he was without uniform, students ridiculed him and used insulting remarks as Choora (a word that is being used for Christians to degrade them) for him. On the other hand the teacher also kept him standing outside the class room in school time to punish him as he was not wearing a uniform. After the school, he informed his father and told that he would not go to school tomorrow. But his father bought a new uniform for his son and encouraged him to go to school the next day.

On the third day, on August 30, in the absence of the teacher from class while he wanted to leave to drink water Raza irritated him with stretching out his leg. As a result he fell down. Raza blamed Sharoon of throwing out his mobile on the ground that broke his mobile screen. Raza started beating Sharoon. Other students also joined Raza. He kicked and punched Sharoon who fell down unconscious. Then Raza ran away from the school. Sharoon was taken to Burewala Tehsil Headquarters Hospital where he was declared dead.

Police registered a case (471/17) against Raza and his other accomplices under section 302/34 of the Pakistan Penal

Code. Police also said that Raza and his family, resident of chak # 431/Eb, fled away the locality. Police handed over the body to heirs after autopsy. Raza got bail on December 12, 2017. The bail is being challenged by the lawyers. **CCJP chapter, Multan**

Christians' religious pictures disrespected

In late hours of December 18, 2016, unknown persons threw black ink on a panaflex of Salavation Army Church, hanging on a street wall in Nankana Sahib a district capitl some 63 km West of Lahore. The panaflex carried religious pictures.

Christian community informed the police. On Janaury 3, 2017, DPO ordered the police to setup a police check-post in the area and ensured the security of the Christian community.

Muslims pelted stones at Church after exchange of hot words between a Christian and Muslim

On November 03, 2017 Muslims pelted stones at Church and beat Pastor and other Christians after exchange of hot words between a Christian Arif Masih and Ansar Ali that turned into Christian Muslim scuffle in a village 71/GB Kukar Wali Tehsil Jaranwala, district Faisalabad.

According to NCJP fact finding team, on the day of occurrence, Arif Masih was going to Church in the morning of November 3, 2018. Arif Ali stopped Arif at the door of Church. Hearing loud hot exchange of words, Pastor Eleazar came out. After intention of Pastor Elisear, Arif Ali left the place, abusing and threatening Pastor as well. After some hours Arif Ali returned back along with some campions. They thrashed Pastor Eleazar and beat other Christians who gathered there. Muslim fellows beat Christians and pelted stones at Church. As a result, Tiles of the Walls of Church and stairs were broken. Christians called police for help however police did not help and did not even register the complaint.

CCJP report, Faisalabad

Murders

Ahmadis

Ahmadi man shot dead in Rahim Yar Khan

Basharat Ahmad (62) was shot dead on May 4, 2017 in Saddar area of Rahim Yar Khan. Ahmad was returning home in Green Town, Rahim Yar Khan from a petrol pump situated at Zahir Pir Road when he was shot by unidentified attackers. He was rushed to the hospital but he could not survive the wounds. He had received two bullet wounds.

According to Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya spokesperson Saleemuddin, Ahmad was targeted because of his religious beliefs. He had no enemies. He further added that the security agencies should take action against hate mongers who propagate Ahmadi killings.

On the complaint of Ataul Quddoose, son-in-law of Ahmad, an FIR was registered under section 302 of PPC.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/04-May-2017/ahmadi-man-shot-dead-in-rahim-yar-khan>

Dr. Abdus Salam's cousin, killed in Nankana Sahib

March 30, 2017 an Ahmadi advocate Malik Saleem Latif and his son Advocate Farhan were shot when they were going to court . Latif died on the spot in Nankana Sahib.

Ahmadiyya spokesperson Saleemuddin said Advocate Latif was the cousin of Nobel Prize winner Dr. Abdus Salam. He was killed because of religious beliefs, said Saleemuddin.

According to police officials, the advocate was killed near Beri Wala Chowk. No FIR was filed till the filing of this report.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/30-Mar-2017/ahmadi-leader-dr-abdus-salam-s-cousin-killed-in-nankana-sahib-attack>

Christians

Ameen Masih burnt to death

On April 4, 2017, 45 years old Christian Ameen Masih, was locked in his house and burned to death by two shop owners and their accomplices for not paying the installments of the goods he got from the shop in Uggoki, Sialkot.

According to the a local eye witness Mr. Khalid Yousaf, Ameen bought electronic compliances from Afzal Electronics and Shehran Electronics worth Rs. 350,000 and sold them out to pay off his deficit. He was a hosiery worker and was

unable to pay the monthly installment of Rs. 18,000/- on time. On April 3, 2017 Muhammad Usman, Asim Ali, Yasir Bajwa and Shehran came to Ameen's house, thrashed him with sticks and cricket bats and dragged him out while threatening to kill him if he would not pay the remaining amount. The whole day Ameen remained under their custody. Later at night shopkeepers returned and confined him at his resident and set the room on fire. They stayed outside the room and did not allow any of the family member or local resident to rescue Ameen.

Later, the family called police helpline, meanwhile, the perpetrators managed to escape. The local residents and relatives broke the wall of the room engulfed with heavy smoke and found Ameen dead and furniture burning.

The police shifted the dead body to the Government Allama Iqbal Memorial Teaching Hospital Sialkot for autopsy. His funeral was held later in the evening and he was laid to rest on the same day on April 4, 2017.

A complaint of the incident was registered at Uggoki Police Station on the complaint of Ameen's wife Rakhil Bibi (40) and an FIR No. 143/17 offence under section 147, 149 and 302 Pakistan Penal Code.

CLAAS report

Daneyal Inayyat gunned down over a petty dispute

On September 01, 2017 a Christian teen Daneyal Inayyat, died and another Christian Waris was severely injured as a result of petty dispute at Walton Road Lahore. A complaint was registered against the perpetrators.



According to Javed Innayat (elder brother of the deceased), on September 1, 2017, at around 7 pm a petty dispute arose between a Christian Mr. Arif Masih resident of Qadri Colony, Walton Road Lahore and a Muslim Mr. Nasir son of Boota Bhatti.

The complainant (Javed Innayat) reported that he, Daneyal, Waris and Pervez (sons of Arif) rushed outside to rescue Arif Masih. Javed claimed that he and others tried to settle the matter.

Meanwhile, few others including Asad s/o Mian Muhammad Boota, Abu Bakar, Faisal s/o Boota and three unidentified men arrived at the scene and started abusing Arif Masih and rest of the Christians. Asad reportedly ran into office of Khawaja Imran and brought a pistol and opened fire at Arif, Javed, Daneyal, Pervez and Waris. A bullet pierced through the chest of Daneyal while Waris got hit on his left ankle. By then, neighbors arrived at the scene and culprits fled from the scene.

Critically wounded Daneyal and Waris were rushed to hospital while Daneyal succumbed to his wounds on the way to the hospital. However, Waris was in critical condition till the filing of this report.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lahore-christian-teen-gunned-down-over-petty-dispute/>

Akhtar Masih murdered for revenge

On May 22, 2017 a Christian farmer Akhtar Masih (53) was stabbed in his back by a Muslim Waqas Dogar in a village of District Sargodha (Punjab). He was taken to the hospital where he succumbed to injuries.

Akhtar Masih also served as a preacher. Six months earlier, Dogar forcibly took a cow from Akhtar's house. On the same day Dogar's grandfather and mother apologized Akhtar for the misdeed. However Waqas Dogar did not like this act. He warned Akhtar Masih of dire consequences.

On May 22, 2017, while Akhtar was entering his house after buying a packet of cigarette, Dogar, attacked on him with a knife. He ran away from the scene. The people around took

Akhtar Masih to hospital where he succumbed to death after six days.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6539>

Attacks

Terrorist attack on Christian Colony (Tin town), Chaman

On December 4, 2017 Christian settlement (Tin town) Chaman (Baluchistan) was attacked in a bomb blast. Seven years old Christian boy, (Lucky Saleem),died and several others injured in this attack.

According to a police officer (Gul Muhammad), terrorists used a grenade which was thrown at the main gate of the community. The blast smashed windows in nearby homes.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6699>

A Church Attacked in Quetta

On December 17, 2017, two suicide bombers attacked a Bethel Memorial Methodist Church Quetta killing at least 11 people and injuring at least 57 others, several critically.

About 400 people had gathered for Sunday service at Bethel Memorial Methodist Church when an assailant detonated his explosives-laden vest near the door of the Church's main Hall. Another attacker failed to detonate his suicide jacket and was shot by security forces.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/pakistan-11-christians-buried-after-quetta-church-attack/>

6 year Christian girl died due to firing

On November 28, 2017 a Seven year Christian girl Humera died by the firing of Muslim money lender Faisalabad.

Waris Masih (a Christian), took Rupees: 40,000/ loan on compound interest from a Muslim money lender Cheema. Waris Masih did not pay back the monthly amount (interest).



On the day of occurrence Muhammad Ajmal alias Mithu Cheema came to the house of Waris Masih and demanded his money. Heated arguments turned into a scuffle. Cheema opened fire that hit the head of daughter of Waris Humera. She was taken to the hospital where she succumbed to injury.

Police registered a case # 507/17 against Cheema under section 302/PPC. and was arrested for investigation.

CCJP Chapter, Faisalabad

Kidnap

Two Christian brothers kidnapped

Two Christians brothers were kidnapped by unknown people. On March 25, 2017, two Christian brothers Younas Masih (38), and Amir Masih (28), brick kiln workers were kidnapped by unknown persons in Dhnola, Faisalabad.

Amer Masih reportedly received a phone call from some unknown person who asked Amer to meet them. According to the nephew of Amir, he got in to a car with some unknown people. When he was not back for some time, the family called his brother Younas Masih. Surprisingly, the cell phone of Younas was found dead.

On March 27, 2017, their employer (brick kiln owner) Mr. Muhammad Azeem field an application regarding kidnap of

the two brothers in Milat Town Police station however police did not take any action. Both the brothers could not be tracked out till the filing of this report.

CCJP office, Faisalabad

Torture

Saleem Masih tortured

On March 17, 2017 a young Christian sweeper Saleem Masih (45) in Faisalabad was severely beaten after he saw some employees stealing timber and warned them to inform the owner.

Saleem was working as a sweeper in an under-construction commercial building, Millat Town Faisalabad for the last six months. On the day of occurrence, he caught the security guard stealing the timber red handed. Saleem warned them that he would inform the owner. As a result Saleem was beaten and expelled from the job.

Saleem told the story to the owner, Muhammad Hanif. on the contrary, security guard, Muhammad Talib (who was a relative of the owner) complained that Saleem himself sold the theft-timber and on forbidding he reportedly scuffled with Talib. Hanif fired Saleem from the job.

On contacting the police station, SHO suggested him for a medical report. After, medical report, Saleem Masih filed a report against the assailants. However no action was taken against the culprits till the filing of this report.

CCJP office, Faisalabad

Imran and Sultan tortured in a fake theft case

A Christian domestic worker Ms. Sana and her relatives were kept in suspicion of theft and were tortured at different police stations in Faisalabad.. On February 20, 2017 a case (FIR # 380/457) was registered against them.

Sana was working at the house of a Muslim Hassan Younas for Rupees:2000/ per month. Three other Muslim domestic workers were also working there.

In the evening of February 18, 2017, the wife of Younas told Sana not to come on duty on the next day (February 19, 2017)

as they were going out of city. Sana informed the lady that she would rather come on February 21, 2017.

On February 21, 2017, when she went to work, she learnt that there had been a robbery in the house. On February 24, Sana, her husband Imran Masih and brother-in-law Sultan Masih (elder brother of her husband) were arrested for interrogation. They were kept for seven days. During interrogation they were tortured and forced to accept the theft. After intervention of some influential persons, they were released on bail.

Again, on March 23, 2017, Imran and Sultan were arrested by the Police (Sargodha Road Police station) and were severely tortured. Sultan's condition deteriorated. Police called his father Allah Rakha to take him home. Allah Rakha learnt from some source that his son and daughter-in-law were not mentioned in the FIR. He sought an advocate who took up a case against the police for Habeas Corpus, for keeping them unlawfully in the lock up.

To save the police, the investigating Officer Rana Aftab registered an FIR # 306/17, 380, 457 against all the victims Sana Bibi, her husband, sister and brother-in-law. After the medical reports of both brothers, their father registered a writ petition against the police in the Session Court of Faisalabad and the case was under proceeding till the filing of this report.

CCJP office, Faisalabad

A Christian worker tortured by factory owner

On July 18, 2017, a Christian factory worker Arif Masih (35), resident of village Girjakh, Gujranwala was tortured by the owner Muhammad Ashraf.

Ashraf worked on furnace of the factory which made large pots. On the day of incident, Ashraf came to Arif's house to get him forcefully on work. During the duty hours, Arif suddenly felt exhaust due to the high temperature of the furnace. He sat down to take rest for a while. The owner became furious finding Arif resting. He abused him and tied him with a machine and locked the room. After three hours, Ashraf somehow got himself released and reached home.

Afterwards, the owner of the factory, Ashraf intruded in Arif's house, dragged him out and tortured him and his wife as well. He also threatened them for dire sequences.

Arif filed an application against Ashraf in the local police station. Police did not take any action against the accused. The case had been registered under section 22-A/22-B and is under trial in the Sessions Court.

CCJP Chapter, Gujranwala

A Christian worker lost his hand

On October 19, 2017 a Christian factory worker, Mr. Yousaf Masih (30), resident of Nidway Saray, Nowshera Virkan, Distt Gujranwala lost his right hand by machine. Yousaf worked as a Roller-man in Asim Metal Factory.

Earlier Yousaf had informed the foreman Abdul Rasheed that the machine was not working properly. However, Rasheed abused him and ordered to continue the work. While Yousaf was standing, Rasheed turned the machine on without informing Yousaf. Consequently, the right hand of the Yousaf was badly

injured. Another Christian called 1122 for rescue, however Rasheed turned them back telling them nothing happened serious. Yousaf was referred to Ghurki Hospital Lahore by the local hospital, where the hand of the Yousaf had to remove.

After recovering, yousaf went to his factory and informed the owner. He expelled him from the job and directed him not to show his face again. Yousaf could not get anything from Social Security Department as his name was not registered by the owner.

CCJP Chapter, Gujranwala

Bonded labour

Javed died due to poison working as a bonded laborer

A Christian Javed Masih (28) s/o of Arshad Masih died reportedly by poisoning in a village Kamal Pur Punjchak district Faisalabad. According to the reports, Javed was working with Tajmal Jut, Muzamal Jut and Bilal Jut under an agreement of two years (June 2015 to 2017) against borrowed money Rs 315,000/.

After completion of two years, Javed told his employers that he would leave the job in June 2017 as per agreement. Jut brothers tied him and thrashed him badly and warned him of dire consequences for leaving the job.

On July 19, 2017, in the evening at about 8 pm Javed did not feel well and fell on the ground. His co-workers picked him up and informed the employers. They took him to the nearest clinic. Doctor advised them to take him to the hospital. They left him in front of his house.

Next morning Javed's family took him to the hospital. He died at about 9:00 am. The doctors declared the death due to given or taken something poisonous.

The police announced it as a suicide case and was reluctant to register the case. The family was persistent that the Jutt brothers had murdered him and demanded justice.

Doctor and Deputy Superintendent of the Police assured to register an FIR after the postmortem report.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6564>

Discrimination at work Place

Humiliation at workplace can cause even death

On August 24, 2017, a Christian girl Ms Asifa (23) D/o Aslam Masih, resident of a village Joyainwala, district Gujranwala died after nervous breakdown due to biased attitude and humiliation at workplace.

Asifa was appointed as a field assistant in an organization “National Rural Support Program” (NRSP) district Gujranwala. She was asked to do other than her job description such as dusting and cleaning of the office. on her refusal to do menial job, she was subjected to mental torture in one or other way.

Due to continuous humiliation, Asifa rendered her resignation, however, she was reportedly blamed for corruption. Under severe mental tension she fell ill and was admitted to local hospital. She was referred to Jinnah Hospital Lahore, where she was diagnosed for Multiple Brain Hemorrhage. She died on August 24, 2017.

CCJP Chapter, Gujranwala

Torture by Police

Majid kept in Habeas Corpus and tortured by police

Mr. Majid (36) a Christian, resident of Mohalla Tariqabad, Hafizabad road, Gujranwala was illegally kept in police custody and tortured for a dispute of money in May 2013.

Mr. Irfan (brother-in-law of Majid) took Rs:500,000/ from a Muslim Muhammad Husnain through Majid, in order to send him abroad, however Irfan could not fulfil his promise. He returned about Rs: 400,000/. Husnain forced Majid to pay the rest of the money however; Majid refused to pay the money.

On January 3, 2017 police arrested Majid and kept him in illegal custody at Shahkot, district Nankana police station. Majid was physically tortured and forced to pay the amount. On January 10, 2017 both parties reached a conciliation after intervention of CCJP staff.

CCJP chapter, Gujranwala

Arslan died due to police torture

Mr. Arslan S/o Mushtaq Masih (14 yrs and a student of class 8th) was beaten to death by the police on a trivial dispute with a police constable's nephew during the tuition in the academy of village Jamber, Sheikhpura.

On October 9, 2017, in the evening, police constables and volunteers forcibly entered the academy and started beating Arslan and dragged him outside the academy. On asking by the academy administration, they were also threatened for dire consequences. Arslan became unconscious; however, the officials claimed that he was pretending. They put him in a police-van and took with them. He died on the way. Police threw him on the road and made their way.

The academy administration informed about the death of Arslan to his parents. The relatives of Arslan protested on the road with the dead body and demanded for registering an FIR and the arrest of the culprits promptly.

After registering an FIR # 33 under sections 148, 149, 302 of PPC and the suspension of the involved officials, the protestors picked up the dead body of the deceased.

Police arrested the involved six culprits Mr. Imtiaz Head-constable, Muhammad Arshad (constable), Arshad (driver), Robin Masih (a police volunteer), Tanveer (a police volunteer), Sardar Billu however, one unknown could not be arrested till the filing of the report.

CCJP Chapter, Gujranwala

Discrimination at work place

On May 12, 2017, a Christian Asif Masih, was forced to resign from his job in Fibers Mills Shekhupura Road Faisalabad. Asif was working as a trainee Operator. On May 02, 2017 Mr. Naveed Ahmed, an area manager reportedly directed Asif Masih, not to drink water from water cooler. "if you Christians touch this cooler, water would become useless for us. Bring your own utensils." The manager said. Afterwards on May 7, 2017 Asif was performing his duty in Ibrahim Fibers when Muhammad Naveed Ahmed, Abid Jameel (Admin), Farman (Supervisor), Akhtar (Supervisor) and Muhammad Umer (D.C) came over there and abused him. other workers managed to settle them. However on May 12, 2017 Asif Masih was forced to resign from his job.

Asif Masih approached police and filed an application against the accused persons, however police did nothing. Asif then filed a writ petition (22A/22B) in additional session court Jaranwala . Court ordered ASI Muhammad Akram and Rana Ejaz for investigation. Afterwards the petition of Asif Masih was dismissed on the findings of inquiry.

Asif Masih now works with his father at his shop.

NCJP Faisalabad

Theft

Two Christian girls accused of theft

Two Christian girls Ms. Areena and Ms. Tehmina were arrested by the police, Cantt, Multan for stealing gold ornament worth Rs. 20 lakh and cash from the house of Mr. Saeed Muhammad Ali Gillani, a high court advocate.

The girls had been working for last ten years in the house of Gillani. CCJP staff applied in District and Sessions Court against the illegal custody of both girls. With continuous follow-up girls were released and declared innocent. **CCJP Chapter, Multan**

Fake Case

A Christian man arrested in a fake case

On August 31, 2017 Muhammad Akhtar (ASI Police) arrested a Christian Imran S/o Lal Masih without warrant from his mobile shop at Langawali Mor Wazirabad, district Gujranwala. He was booked in CIA locked-up. After three days Amer, the brother of Imran came to know about the where about of Imran. Imran was booked for theft of a mobile phone which someone had reportedly sold at his shop. According to ASI, the cell phone had been used in a robbery. Muhammad Khalid, the headman of the village assured the ASI about the innocence of Imran and garneted the innocence of Imran and Imran was released.

CCJP report: Gujranwala



Religious Freedom

Religious Freedom

“You are free, you are free to go to your temples; you are free to go to your mosques or any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed— that has nothing to do with the business of the State....”

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, August 11, 1947

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.

(Article 18, UDHR)

Subject to law, public order and morality

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

(b) Every religious denomination and every sect therefore shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institution.

(Article 20, The Constitution of Pakistan)

Subject to law

(c) No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any educational institution maintained wholly by that community or denomination; and

(d) No citizen shall be denied admission to any educational institution receiving aid from public revenues on the ground of race, religion, caste or place of birth.

(Article 22 (3), The Constitution of Pakistan)

Convert to Islam if you want to get free

In the Youhanabad lynching case in Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC), Public Prosecutor Syed Anees Shah reportedly gathered some 42 accused members of the Christian community outside the courtroom and asked them to convert to Islam, guaranteeing their acquittal if they agreed. However the accused individuals refused to accept such an offer.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/31-Mar-17/stop-harrassing-minorities>

Two of the accused died in jail due to lack of proper diet and treatment.

Inderyas Masih S/o Ghulam Masih (32) died of cardiac arrest on August 13, 2017. Inderyas was father of three kids.

Usman Shoukat S/o Shoukat died of heart attack on December 9, 2017. He was father of two kids.

Threats

Christian family in danger of looming retribution

In 1990s a Muslim girl Saima (not real name), converted to Christianity and married a Christian man Abid Masih. Her family threatened to kill them. As a result the couple shifted to an undisclosed place.

The Christian family once again faced threats in September 2017 as the Muslim family found out the location of Abid and Saima (pregnant with third child). They demanded that Abid should divorce Saima and hand her over to them otherwise they would abduct his sister.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-family-imperiled-by-looming-retribution/>

Lawyer received death threats for helping minorities in court

A Christian lawyer, Jacqueline Sultan, reportedly received a threatening letter wherein she was warned that she will be killed if she did not stop her work in May 2017. Jacqueline had been defending people charged with blasphemy and helping victims of forced conversion and marriages.

She is a High Court advocate and a member of the Karachi Bar Council. The Karachi Bar Association in its general body meeting, on May 12, 2017, took serious notice of the issue and demanded that the authorities should provide the lawyer with adequate security.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1408265/lawyer-receives-death-threat-helping-minorities-court/>

Forced Conversion

Hindu students demonstration for recovery of Ravita Meghwar

On June 18, 2017, Hindu students took out a rally in front of press club, Hyderabad against forced marriage of underage Hindu girl Ravita Meghwar and demanded her recovery.

They demanded steps to recover kidnapped Hindu girl Ravita Meghwar and asked higher judiciary to take notice of atrocities against minorities and to provide them complete protection.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6513>

Hindu girl allegedly “kidnapped” by influential villagers in Tharpakar

On June 6, 2017, a 16 years old Hindu girl Ravita Meghwar was allegedly kidnapped from a village Varayno in Nagarparkar area of district Tharparkar (Sindh).

The parents and relatives of the girl alleged that the kidnappers took away Ravita Meghwar after giving sleeping pills to her 15 family members in Varayno village near Nagarparkar.

Some of the girl's family members, including her father and mother were admitted to a rural health centre in Islamkot in an unconscious state.

Haqu, the girl's mother and father Satram Das in the hospital alleged that their daughter was kidnapped by influential members from the Syed community and expressed the fear that Ravita might be forcibly married to Syed Nawaz Ali Shah, who according to them, used to tease her.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1337811>

SHC allowed “Underage” Hindu girl to live with husband

The Sindh High Court ordered police to produce Ravita Meghwar before the court. The directive was issued on an application submitted by Ravita’s father, Satram Das Meghwar, through Advocate Bhagwandas in opposition to her conversion and marriage.

Meghwar told the court that his daughter, who was 16 years old, got unlawfully married to Syed Nawaz Ali Shah after being abducted from her village near Nagarparkar Town on June 6, 2017.

His lawyer argued that the marriage under the age of 18 was an offence that could be penalized under the Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act, 2013. He said the registrar stated Shah’s year of birth (1980) and the national identity card number on the marriage certificate. Ravita’s age was shown as about 18 years, but there was no NIC number mentioned. On the same note, the lawyer informed, the certificate of conversion to Islam also did not state her date of birth and NIC number, but her age was shown as 18 years.

On the other hand, Shah and Ravita had filed in the SHC an application in search of protection and accusing the girl’s parents of issuing death threat. The court set June 30 the date of hearing on the application.

Ravita pleaded to her parents to allow her live with her husband peacefully as, according to her, she had by her own consent decided to embrace Islam to marry the person of her choice. The court on June 23, 2017 allowed a girl who was forcibly converted’ from Hinduism to Islam to live with her husband.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Jun-2017/shc-allows-girl-forcibly-converted-to-islam-to-live-with-husband>

Police reluctant to arrest Muslim kidnappers of minor Christian girl

On April 5, 2017 a Christian girl Sawera in Gujranwala was abducted by a Muslim man Muhammad Ijaz Butt with the help of his accomplices Wahab Butt and Naveed Burgaranwala.

she was reportedly, forcibly converted to Islam and married one of her abductors.

Rozi Bibi, the mother of the victim, registered a complaint (FIR No. 241/17) against the culprits under section 365-B PPC on April 6, 2017 in Police Station Civil Lines District Gujranwala.

Police were reluctant to take any legal step against the culprits on the pretext that the victim girl had converted to Islam and married with one of her abductors. The perpetrators also initiated legal action against the victim family to put pressure for compromise.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6400>

A Christian girl abducted and forcibly converted to Islam

On April 15, 2017, a 13 years old Christian girl Maria Ashraf was abducted by a Muslim Amjad Ali in a village Gagu Mandi in district Vehari (South Punjab). The girl was reportedly sexually assaulted and converted to Islam for marriage.

After 8 days of the abduction, on the complaint of her mother Bushra Bibi a case (FIR # 255/17) offence under section 365-B (abduction) was registered on April 23, 2017 at local police station against the culprits namely Amjad Ali s/o Niaz Ahmed (abductor) and his accomplices Muhammad Imran s/o Sultan, Muhammad Ashfaq s/o Niaz Ahmed and Kaka s/o Muhammad Rafique.

Maria Ashraf (13 years, a Christian girl) was abducted by a Muslim Amjad Ali on April 15, 2017 on Easter night and sexually assaulted her and then converted her to Islam for marriage just to save him from legal litigation. The incident occurred in Gaggio Mandi, a village in Vehari District.

After abduction of Maria her family pleaded for the recovery of their daughter but the girl was not recovered yet. After eight days of the abduction on the complaint of her mother Bushra Bibi a case FIR No.255/17, offence under section 365-B (abduction) of the Pakistan Penal Code was registered on April 23, 2017 at local Police Station against the culprits namely Amjad Ali s/o Niaz Ahmed (abductor) and his accomplices Muhammad Imran s/o Sultan, Muhammad Ashfaq s/o Niaz Ahmed and Kaka s/o Muhammad Rafique.

Bushra had fixed Maria's marriage with Maqsood Masih resident of the other village. On April 15, 2017, Bushra went to Maqsood's house and stayed there overnight. In her absence, Maria was abducted by Amjad and his accomplices at night while Maria's grandfather and her sibling were sleeping.

After eight days of the abduction, on April 23, 2017 the abductor Amjad Ali sent certificates of Maria's conversion to Islam and Muslim marriage documents in the local police station.

CLAAS report

Christian wife forced to live with her Muslim convert husband

On May 26, 2016, a Christian woman Shakeela Bibi, from Arifwala,(Punjab) filed a petition in court stating that since her husband has embraced Islam, she cannot live with him.

Honorable Judge (Muslim) commented that she should also convert to Islam and keep living with him. Bibi insisted that while she could abandon her husband, she could not abandon her Christian faith.

According to the reports, Shakeela married to Aslam Masih with the consent of her parents. After Aslam embraced Islam, Shakeela filed a petition for dissolution of marriage against Aslam. Shockingly, when Shakeela was crying before the court, the family judge asked her to convert to Islam instead of dealing with her divorce petition.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6469>

A Christian girl forcibly converted to Islam, recovered

In April 2017 a Christian girl Sumbal (14) resident of Mohallah Hasan Town, district Hafizabad (Punjab) was forcibly converted to Islam by a local police official Munir Ahmed (Muslim). He reportedly kept her in his illegal detention for at least six months.

Munir Ahmed lived next door to Sumbal's house. The families had good relations and visited each other. In December 2016, Sumbal had a dispute with the wife of her brother. Mariam (Sister in-law of Munir) took her to her home to settle the matter. Sumbal remained there till evening.

Later at night, Munir Ahmed came to Sumbal house and forcibly took her to his home.

Sumbal (a 14 year Christian girl) was forcibly converted to Islam by local police official, Munir Ahmed who is Assistant Sub Inspector of City Police Station Hafiz Abad. He kept her in his illegal detention for the last six months.

On April 21, 2017 Sumbal's mother requested legal assistance for the recovery of her daughter. Elizabeth, her two daughters and four sons live in Mohallah Hasan Town, Hafiz Abad. Her husband passed away in 2013. There were only two Christian families in the area among the Muslim Community.

Sumbal was a good friend with her next-door neighbour Munir Ahmed's sister-in-law, Mariam, and they would often visit each other's house.

Sumbal's sister in-law, Shazia wife of Sunny is deaf and dumb the pair would often fight over minor issues. Last December Sumbal and Shazia had a fight and Shazia beat Sumbal in Mariam's presence. To settle the dispute Mariam invited Sumbal to her house, where she spent the whole day.

When Elizabeth (Mother of Sumbal) went to take Sumbal back, she was told by Munir Ahmed that Sumbal had embraced Islam and her new name was Fatima. She was told that Sumbal did not want to go with her mother. She was further told that Sumbal will practice Islam and will be married to a Muslim man.

Then Munir Ahmed stated that Sumbal embraced Islam and her Islamic name was Fatima. He said that she lives with Munir to practice her Islamic religion and did not want to go with her mother again. He further stated that Sumbal will stay with him and they will get her married to a Muslim man.

On April 26, 2017, Elizabeth filed a Habeas Corpus Petition in Lahore High Court for the recovery of her daughter. On the same day the court deputed bailiff for the recovery of Sumbal and ordered for her to be produced on April 27. After the court orders, Sumbal was recovered from Munir Ahmed house.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6422>

Churchmen condemn propagation of anti-Christians content on media

On May 10, 2017, Churchmen denounced propagation of anti-Christians content on electronic and social media. They urged the authorities to take steps in order to stop the anti-Christian hatred being aired on TV channels.

For this reason, churchmen from several denominations gathered under the banner of Ecumenical Solidarity Commission of Lahore and voiced serious concerns about the issue. Priests urged the concerned authorities to stop the denigration campaign that instigates violence against religious minorities.

Representatives of the Anglican, Presbyterian and Catholic Churches strongly censured television broadcasts, articles and social media content that degrade Pakistani Christians.

The clergymen unanimously decided to write an official letter to the government and Amar Mehmood, owner of the Dunya TV channel. Reportedly during a TV show some public figures, who were invited as guests continually said defamatory words against Christians on air.

Christian leaders said: This wave of hatred will be brought to the attention of the higher authorities. Another drama titled Baji Irshad was also discussed during the meeting which was termed deplorable. The Christian leaders also discussed the controversial issue of misuse of blasphemy law. They

condemned the heinous murder of Mashal Khan, as they demanded concrete steps in order to prevent misuse of blasphemy law.

Rev. Fr. Inayat Bernard said that misuse of blasphemy laws has already unjustly struck thousands of people, including Muslims, Christians and Hindus who are in prison.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lahore-churchmen-condemn-propagation-of-anti-christians-content-on-media/>

Attacks on religious places

Hindu temple desecrated in Sindh's Gharo

On April 28, 2017 police registered a First Information Report (FIR) against three persons for desecrating the deities inside a Hindu temple in Thatta (Sindh).

According to community leaders, unknown miscreants entered the temple of Rama Pir and dumped their sacred idols in the sewage lines after desecrating them.

Gharo Town Committee Councillor Lal Mehshwari, while talking to Dawn, said the condemnable act was carried out on the eve of an annual festival at their place of worship, and urged the authorities concerned to take notice of the incident.

The police registered the FIR under sections of 295 A of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and Sections 6 and 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) on behalf of the state.

SSP Thatta Fida Hussain Mastoi said an investigation was under way, but no arrest was reported till the filing of this report.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1329828>

For the past several decades, minorities including those belonging to the Christian, Hindu and Ahmedi communities — have faced harsh discrimination at the hands of both state and society. Members of these communities have been forced to deal with the deaths of their loved ones over the petty disputes, which take on a religious hue.

In such a context, it was commendable of the Sindh Assembly to pass a bill on forced conversions a few months ago even though it couldn't be finally enforced due to the concerns raised by religious clerics and certain state officials. Despite that, the successful passage of the Hindu Marriage Bill by both the national and Sindh assemblies recently is a landmark achievement. Such legislation is also needed to extend constitutional protection and safeguards to other minority communities in a society that is increasingly fundamentalist and obscurantist.

It is unfortunate that Pakistan is still haunted by senseless policies adopted in the 1970s and 1980s that led to the rise of a virulent religion-based populism. The alleged actions of the public prosecutor in the Youhanabad lynching case are a result of such policies, which made deep inroads into the fabric of society.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, if he is to live up to the image that he wants to create of being a supporter of a tolerant and inclusive Pakistan, should take notice of such matters as a matter of the utmost priority. The younger Sharif who runs the Punjab province has even a greater responsibility to act. Christians have been continuously targeted under his watch exposing the much-hyped claims of good governance'.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/31-Mar-17/stop-harrassing-minorities>

Group of Muslims attacked Christian colony, Bhai Phero, Kasur

On April 18, 2017 an armed group of Muslim youth (about 20 to 25) riding on motor cycles attacked at Christian Colony Bhai Pheru (district Kasur of Punjab), tortured Christians and opened aerial firing at their homes.

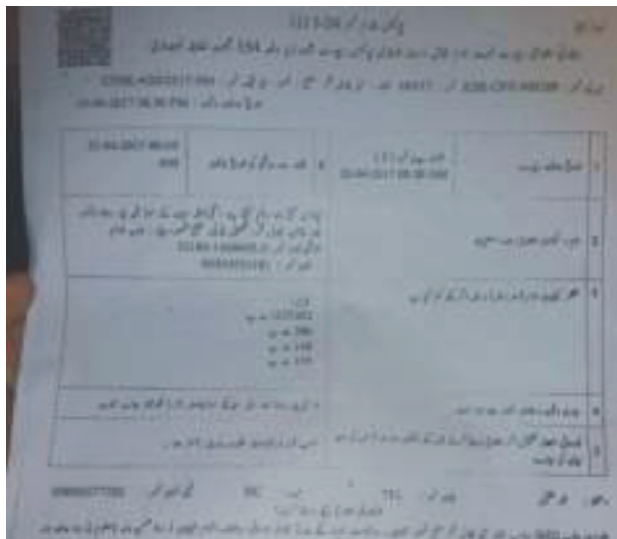
According to the report on April 18, 2017, a Christian laborer, Afaq Masih (19), was coming back home when a Muslim Rao Shani and his accomplices forcibly stopped him and snatched his cell phone on the pretext that they wanted to use it to call someone. He requested them to return back his cell phone however; they refused and started beating him. He went home without taking back his phone. Afterwards,

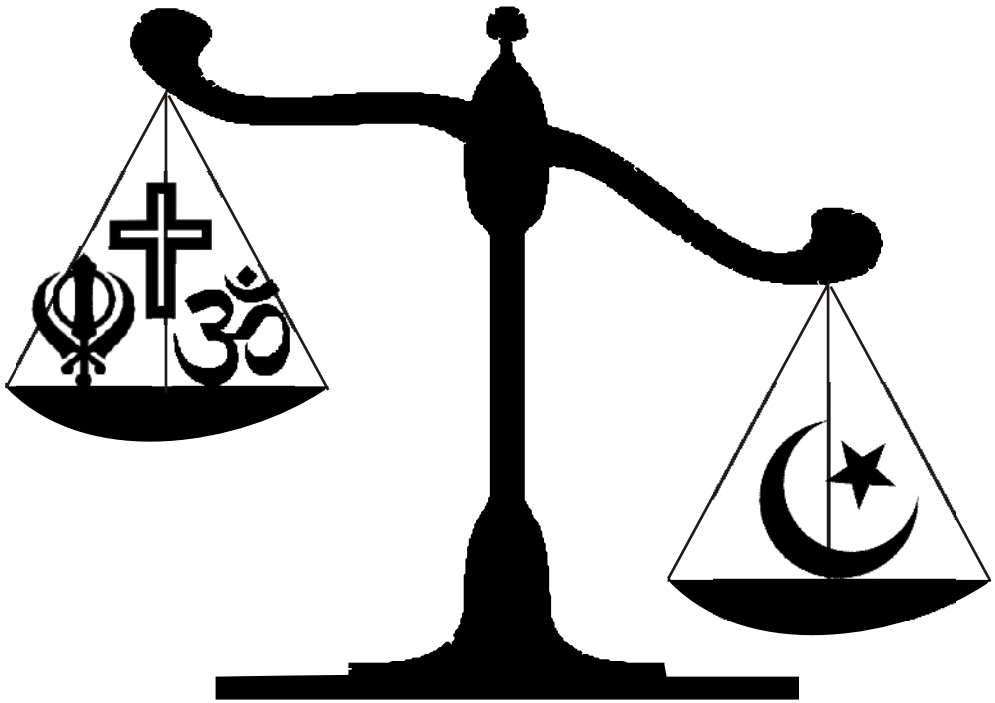
they came to his home and opened aerial firing at his home and threatened him of dire consequences.

The next day on April 19, 2017, the attackers on motorcycles again came to his home, opened aerial firing at homes, threw stones at their homes and threatened the whole Christian community.

City Police station registered (FIR no.189/17) a case without adding the offence of using fire arms to terrorized the whole Christian community on the complaint of Pauloos Masih. Police were reluctant to arrest the attackers. The Christians of area remained scared.

[Http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6414](http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6414)





DISCRIMINATORY LAWS

DISCRIMINATORY LAWS

Discrimination

The word discrimination in various dictionaries is defined as:

- Treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit.
- The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

Legal discrimination positive and negative

Constitution of Pakistan has maintained the discriminatory nature from a long time; giving the partial rights to the minorities at one side and violating them in the other. Constitution contains much discrimination that is either positive or negative.

Constitution of Pakistan

Art. 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.

Article 22: Safeguards as to educational institutions in respect of religion, etc.

- (1) No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend

religious worship, if such instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

- (3)(a) no religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any educational institution maintained wholly by that community or denomination; and
- (4) Nothing in this Article shall prevent any public authority from making provision for the advancement of any socially or educationally backward class of citizens.

Preamble of the Constitution of Pakistan

- Fundamental rights to be guaranteed, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality;
- Adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes;

Discriminations in the Constitution

- Article 2: Islam to be State religion
Islam shall be the State religion of Pakistan.

Article 31. Islamic way of life.

1) living in accordance with the fundamental principles and basic concepts of Islam and to provide facilities whereby they may be enabled to understand the meaning of life according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

(2) The state shall endeavor, as respects the Muslims of Pakistan, :

(a) to make the teaching of the Holy Quran and Islamiat compulsory, to encourage and facilitate the learning of Arabic language and to secure correct and exact printing and publishing of the Holy Quran;

(b) to promote unity and the observance of the Islamic moral standards; and

(c) to secure the proper organization of zakat,[ushr,] auqaf and Masjids.

Article 36. Protection of minorities.

- The State shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their due representation in the Federal and Provincial services
- 41. (2) President to be Muslim
- 91. (3) Prime Minister to be Muslim

Article 203 (E) Federal Shariat Court

- The Federal Shariat Court has power to declare any law defunct if repugnant to Islam and to suggest amendments in such laws under Art. 31-D.
 - A non-Muslim can neither be judge nor can appear as a lawyer and witness in the Federal Shariat Court. Maximum one can only be a petitioner whereas the petition is to be decided according to the Islamic injunctions
- Article 260 (3)**

- In the Constitution and all enactments and other legal instruments, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context
- (a) "Muslim" means a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Almighty Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW), the last of the prophets, and does not believe in, or recognize as a prophet or religious reformer, any person who claimed or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (SAW); and
- (b) "non-Muslim" means a person who is not a Muslim and includes a person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Parsi community, a person of the Qadiani Group or the Lahori Group who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name or a Bahai, and a person belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes.]

Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion and Belief:

Effective measures:

4.1 *All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discriminations on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.*

4.2 *All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds or other beliefs in this matter.*

(Article 4)

National legislation:

7.1 The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice. (Article 7)

The Human Rights Monitor has enumerated the discriminatory laws in Pakistan since 1997, when its debut report came. With the exception of repeal of Separate Electorate that too involved a marathon campaign by religious minorities themselves, the laws that happen to be discriminatory on the basis of religion and belief did not change much. Therefore this chapter in the report had to be repetitive.

Ever since the Objective Resolution was passed in 1949, the Constitutional and legal framework in Pakistan has been bent towards a theocratic and religiously biased polity.

Drafters of these laws ignored the International norms and standards of human rights about non-discrimination thus this framework totally missed out the value attached to the principle of parity of citizens. Here are the examples and specimen of the discrimination on the basis of religion and belief that has been part and parcel of legal and juridical approach for over six decades.

The Constitution defines citizens' beliefs:

In the constitution and all enactments and other legal instruments, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context;

—Muslimll means a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Almighty Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (SAW), the last of the prophets, and does not believe in, or recognizes as a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (SAW); and; Article 260(3a)

“non-Muslim” means a person who is not a Muslim and includes a person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Parsi community, a person of the Qadiani Group of the Lahori Group (who call themselves “Ahmadis” or by any other name), or a Bahai, and a person belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes.

Article 260 (3b)

Following is a specimen of discriminations that Constitution of Pakistan maintains and their effects:

Islam is the state religion Art. (2).

The head of State has to be a Muslim Art. 41(2).

The oath for Prime Minister in the third schedule of Art. 91 (3), suggests that this office is also reserved for a Muslim. He is required to declare his belief in the finality of the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (SAW), Quran and Sunnah.

Effects

- a) A state only sets a bad precedent for its citizens by such a reservation. It sends an unequivocal message that the rule of merit can be compromised for the inclusion of the preferred religion and that the exclusion of segments of citizenry is no vice. Furthermore, the exclusivism, once underway, knows no bounds.
- b) Such a constitutional and legislative approach gave way to the self-image of a —never satisfied characterll with self-pity a galore. On the other hand, the statutory endorsement of discrimination created space for power politics. Political stability became an elusive dream, because the very principle of the equality of all citizens had been compromised in the most authentic national document.
- c) The trickle down effect of these Articles was horrific. The mindset influenced by these articles is reflected in incidents of religious intolerance where individuals

refused to accept the right of religious minorities to occupy even the pettiest of Government jobs. There is chorus heard everywhere now and then by religious and sectarian organizations demanding removal of Ahmadis from a 'key post'. Given these provisions and policies that culminated the representation of religious minorities drastically changed between 1950s and 1990s in the superior services, judiciary and administration, because the discrimination on the basis of religion became a legally and officially accepted norm.

More on the Constitution:

No law repugnant to Islamic injunctions (of course as expounded by the Islamic clergy) can be enforced in Pakistan, Art. 227.

A Council of Islamic Ideology is functioning in the country for past 50 years, with an advisory constitutional role to oversee the Islamic sanction of a law till 1977 but a mandatory intervention since the amendments introduced by Gen. Zia regime; Art. 203 A-J.

The Council neither had representation of religious minorities nor were the sentiments and interest of religious minorities taken into account in its recommendations. Yet the consequences of its actions and its expenditures are borne by the whole nation.

The Government is entrusted to promote the Islamic way of life under Art.31.

The Federal Shariat Court has power to declare any law defunct if repugnant to Islam and to suggest amendments in such laws under Art. 31-D.

Federal Shariat Court is a parallel judicial system, whose utility remains unevaluated by a competent body and yet unproven. Its jurisdiction extends to the whole of Pakistan. Article 203-E (4) says that only a Muslim lawyer is entitled to appear before the Federal Shariat Court.

A non-Muslim can neither be judge nor can appear as a lawyer and witness in the Federal Shariat Court. Maximum one can only be petitioner whereas the petition is to be decided according to the Islamic injunctions.

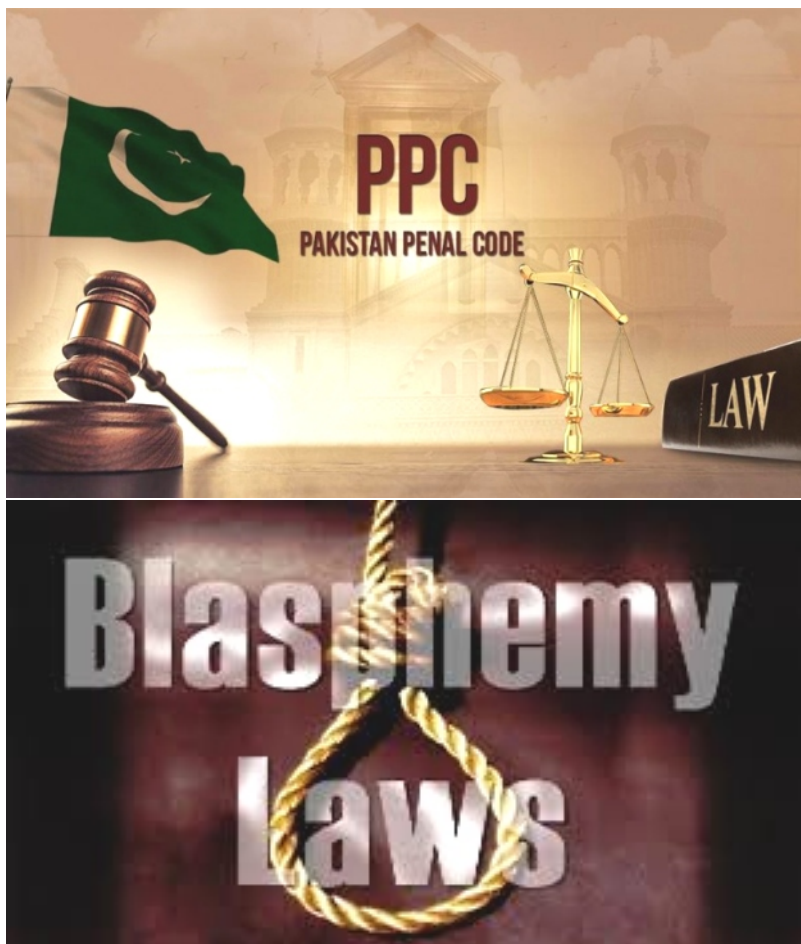
There are divisive laws that discriminate on the basis of religion and are source of human rights violations:

- a) *A Shariat Act was passed by the parliament in 1991, which made Sharia the “Supreme Law” of the land. The Act also protects outdated and redundant Personal Laws for religious minorities.*
- b) *Zakat & Usher (religious taxes for the Muslims) laws discriminate not only between non-Muslims and Muslims but also between Muslim sects. Deducting Zakat by the banks has caused division and discrimination among the citizens of Pakistan. Moreover, these taxes, according to interpretations, are not to be spent on the welfare of religious minorities.*
- c) *The Hudood and Zina Ordinance are part of criminal law. It fails to make a distinction between rape and adultery, (the Commission of Inquiry for Women, constituted by the Government, demanded repeal of this law in 1997) and makes a religious law and punishments applicable to non-Muslims, which are against their belief system.*
- d) *The Qisas and Diyat Ordinance (Shariat Laws regarding homicide and blood money) is part of Pakistan Penal Code since 1990. Even though, it has been criticized by eminent jurists and human rights activists and should not be applicable to non-Muslims.*
- e) *The Law of Evidence (Qanun-e-Shahadat) 1984 reduces the value of court testimony of a Muslim woman and non-Muslim citizen to half of that of a Muslim male, in cases constituted under Islamic laws. Section 3 of this ordinance says: The court shall*

determine the components of the witness in accordance with the qualification, prescribed by the injunctions of Islam, as laid down in Holy Quran and Sunnah for witness, and, where such witness is not forthcoming, the court may take the evidence of a witness who may be available.

- f) *Many lives have been lost and hundreds of families have suffered due to blasphemy laws (Sections 295-B & C, 298-A, B & C of the Pakistan Penal Code), enforced gradually since 1980. These laws are a mean of persecuting religious minorities.*
- g) There are some criminal laws that bar appointment of a non-Muslim judge as presiding officer (Judge). That must be a reason why in the subordinate courts where the trials of criminal cases take place there is hardly any non-Muslim judge in Pakistan's judiciary.
- h) The separate electorate based on religious apartheid was abolished in 2002 after a struggle for two decades. However, it continued to be in practice in 2005 as far as local bodies system is concerned.

There are a number of regulations and policies concerning; syllabus for educational institutions, Government controlled media, concessions for the inmates in jail, admissions and filling vacancies that are based on biases for religious minorities (discussed in first two chapters).



Blasphemy Laws

Blasphemy Laws

Sections 295 B and C, 298, A, B and C commonly known as blasphemy laws, were added gradually to the Pakistan Penal Code, between 1980 and 1996. The first two prescribe life imprisonment and capital punishment for the offences of offering insult to Holy Quran and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) respectively. The remaining sections deal with the offences of passing insulting remarks, signs in any form against the wives, companions and family of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) prescribing punishments from three to ten years of imprisonment and fine. The last section 298-C prohibits Ahmedis from preaching their religion and 'posing' to be a Muslim.

The penal law which is mainly inherited from the British period had adequate arrangement to protect the places of worship and other faiths related articles and prescribed punishment for disturbing interfaith peace and harmony (Sections 295, and 295 A, 296, 297 and 298 of the Penal Code). However these laws were not religion specific and the punishment was based on the legal supposition that such acts caused provocation and social disturbance.

The dangerous aspect of the approach used in these laws is the concept of 'honor' of the holy persons of one religion supposedly to be protected by the state and law in a multi-religious society. Such concepts are prone to vague interpretations in any given society.

Besides the limitation of defining honor, there is inherent problem with the assumption of the laws that people are inclined to offer insult to the holy personage which the law has to stop. Therefore the criterion to ascertain the

validity of the allegation is loose. The intention or the motive' a universally accepted standard of establishing a crime was ignored.

Due to legal lacunas these laws, commonly known as blasphemy laws have been grossly abused. In the wake of sectarian and denominational differences the Muslim community became the prime victim as far the number of the persons accused under the blasphemy charges.

The worst effect of the blasphemy laws was that it instilled a sense of insecurity among non-Muslim in their daily life. While their interaction as neighbor, colleagues, fellow passengers was inevitable a looming ignorance and fanaticism made religion a convenient tool of religious persecution.

As far as impact of the laws the minorities suffered the most due to the environment created by the existence of blasphemy laws. In case of a non-Muslim accused, the trial took several years of pleading and the whole community was targeted. In several incidents their places of worship, properties were burnt and household goods looted.

Ultimately justice was the first causality and the legal system as threatened by extremist forces was discredited. Evidence becomes irrelevant in many cases.

The civil society in Pakistan offered resistance to these laws right from their inception. In arguments in arguments, hundreds of articles have been written by law experts and human rights activists since 1980.

In April 2017, a 23 year student Mishal Khan of Abdul Khan Wali Khan University was killed by his enraged students

mob for allegedly “ publishing blasphemous content online’ . No evidence against Mishall was found by the inquiry committee. Such incidents have built a negative sentiment against blasphemy laws. Today, the common people are more informed about the scale of abuse and outcome of these laws, they will not object to the repeal of these laws.

Blasphemy victims from 1987 to 2017

<u>Muslim</u>	<u>Ahmedi</u>	<u>Christian</u>	<u>Hindu</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>774</u>	<u>501</u>	<u>219</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1534</u>

Muslim Victims

Two suspects from Karachi arrested by FIA

Mr. Ayaz Nizami alias Abdul Waheed and Rana Nauman were arrested by Federal Investigating Authority (FIA) for uploading blasphemous content on social media.

According to the FIA sources, the arrested persons had admitted having contacts in Holland, USA, UK and Canada from where they got financial and technical assistance. Cyber Crime Circle Islamabad registered an FIR under section 7/17. According to the report, both of the suspects used to upload blasphemous content.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/24-Mar-2017/blasphemy-crackdown-fia-arrests-2-suspects-from-karachi>

Four indicted for publishing blasphemous material

On March 19, 2017, the FIA booked four people under sections 295-A, 295-B, 295-C, 298, 298-A, 298-B, 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code read with Section 11 of Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 (PECA), and Sections 6(f), 7(h), 8

& 9 of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997. However, the accused including Professor Anwar, Abdul Waheed, Rana Nauman and Nasir denied the charges.

On September 12, 2017, the Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad Judge Shahrukh Arjumand conducted hearing of this matter and framed the charges against the four accused facing the charges of publishing blasphemous content on the social media.

The four persons were in jail while other three were still at large till the filing of this report.

The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad on September 12, 2017 indicted four persons arrested for their alleged role in publishing blasphemous material on the social media.

<http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/13-Sep-2017/four-indicted-for-publishing-blasphemous-material>

Youth booked over blasphemy in Haripur, KPK

On September 30, 2017, Mr. Syed Ahsan Shah was arrested by police for allegedly uploading blasphemous matter on a social networking site in Haripur (district of KPK) . A case was registered against him under Section 298-A of PPC.

The applicant alleged that Ahsan Shah, resident of Kot Najeebullah, had uploaded blasphemous material on Facebook.

Sources said the police arrested the accused and presented him in a local court, which later approved his bail application. An official said the complaint was investigated against Shah by people in his neighborhood.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1520517/youth-booked-blasphemy-haripur/>

No evidence found against bloggers accused of blasphemy

On December 22, 2017 the five who went missing in 2017 were cleared of blasphemy charges by Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

Four of them had been released, with some accusing their captors of torture. No group claimed responsibility for their abduction, and the government and military had denied involvement. However during their disappearance, a virulent social media campaign to paint them as blasphemers began, triggering a flood of threats. The allegations were enough to put the five activists' lives in danger.

On December 22, 2017 the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) told the Islamabad High Court it could find no evidence against the five men. —The FIA officials told the court it ... seems the five bloggers were not involved in blasphemy

The campaign against the missing men spotlighted how extremist efforts to muzzle liberal voices using state laws have found a powerful new platform online, rights activists say.

The result is often self-censorship, and in the wake of the allegations, a number of liberal commentators shut down their accounts completely.

According to Ahmad Waqas Goraya, one of the activists who was released and lives in the Netherlands, the court should now investigate why Pakistan's mainstream media repeated the dangerous claims against him without proof.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1378262>

UPDATE

Blasphemy case closed after death of accused Christian

A blasphemy accused Mukhtar Masih died on November 02, 2017 in Bagh Hospital Abbottabad. A case was registered against him under section 295-A & 298. He was granted bail on May 16, 2017.

Due to life threats to Mukhtar and his family, they had to shift to Abbottabad. Under extreme mental pressure, Mukhtar got sick and was admitted to hospital. After a few months, he died in the hospital. On November 20, 2017 Additional Judge Saadat Rasool closed the case after taking the death certificate of Mukhtar Masih.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6690>

Life threats

Christians flee village after death threats against teenager accused of blasphemy

On November 03, 2017 five Christian families went into hiding after in the wake of death threats after a 18 years old Christian boy Sonu Arshad was accused of blasphemy in a remote village Sukheki district Hafizabad , some 200 Km North of Lahore.

A Facebook page reportedly belonging to a local TV channel posted a photograph of Sonu asking locals to burn his Church and give him death penalty for blasphemy.

According to police official Tahir Husain, there was no evidence against Arshad. He further stated that the situation was under control and a case had been filed against some unidentified people who created a fake Facebook page.

There is no evidence that Arshad committed any crime, Tahir Hussain said. This is a fake campaign and the case

has been forwarded to the Federal Investigation Agency to identify those who made this fake Facebook page.

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/pakistan-christians-flee-village-death-threats-teenager-accused-blasphemy/>

Life imprisonment

Bhait handed life imprisonment for committing blasphemy

Additional District and Sessions court in Rahim Yar Khan (South Punjab) sentenced Bhait to life imprisonment on blasphemy charges on October 28, 2017. The court also ordered the convict to submit Rs100,000 fine.

In his verdict, Judge Khursheed Ahmed Anjum ruled that the convict committed blasphemy on the social media. A complaint was registered against Bhait in July, 2016 for reportedly posting blasphemous content on social media. A first information report based on the complaint was lodged after some time.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1366904/man-in-rahim-yar-khan-handed-life-imprisonment-for-committing-blasphemy>

Zafar Bhatti given life imprisonment

Zaffar Bhatti (51), a pastor was sentenced to life imprisonment under section 295-C by Lahore High Court on May 3, 2017 for allegedly sending out blasphemous texts.

Mr. Bhatti was accused of sending blasphemous text messages from his phone, however reports proved that the SIM was not registered by Mr. Bhatti rather to a woman Ms. Ghazala Khan own it.

Zaffar Bhatti and Ghazala were arrested on November 11, 2012. Zaffar Bhatti is imprisoned in Central Jail Adiala, Rawalpindi, since July 2012. He has faced several attempts

on his life including an incident of poisoning on March 31, 20113. Ghazala Khan has passed away in November 2016.

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/51-year-old-pastor-given-life-imprisonment-for-alleged-blasphemous-text-message>

Acquittal

Man absolved of blasphemy charges after nine years in prison

On December 29, 2017, a blasphemy accused, Muhammad Mansha (58) was acquitted by the apex court for lack of evidence. After hearing the arguments, the Supreme Court bench (Justice Dost Muhammad and Justice Qazi Feaz Isa) absolved the charges with the observation that the person falsely accused others of desecration of Holy Quran and revered personalities in fact committed blasphemy.

Police arrested Mansha on Sept 29, 2008 for allegedly desecrating pages of the Holy Quran in a Masjid in the Sadiq Gunj area of Bahawalnagar and registered a case under Section 295-B of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1379692/man-absolved-of-blasphemy-charges-after-nine-years-in-prison>

Bail

Blasphemy suspect granted bail by Supreme Court after three years

After spending more than three years in jail, a Christian man Adnan Prince accused of blasphemy was granted bail by a three-member bench of the Supreme Court on February 1, 2017.

The bench, headed by Justice Dost Muhammad Khan, ordered the release of Adnan Prince, a resident of Lahore, against a bail bond worth Rs. 300,000.

Prince was in Jail since November 9, 2013 following registration of an FIR against him under sections 295-A, 295-B and 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1314248/three-years-jail-blasphemy-suspect-granted-bail-supreme-court/>

Pastor released on bail as evidence is not valid

On December, 6, 2017, a Pastor, Babu Shahbaz (42) was released on bail by Judge Malik Shahzad Ahmed Khan at Lahore High Court. The verdict read: "The accused allegedly made an extrajudicial confession ... in police custody therefore this is not admissible as evidence in court. The Polygraph test is a weak type of evidence and this cannot be relied upon blindly. Justice added, "No page of the Sipara (chapter) allegedly recovered from the possession of the petitioner was found to be torn. Mere recovery of a blue marker from the possession of the petitioner is by itself not sufficient to refuse bail to the petitioner because a blue marker is available in almost every second house of big cities of this country."

He was arrested on 30th December 2016, after a group of local Muslims found 150 torn pages of the Quran strewn in the street. His accusers then alleged that Shahbaz's name was printed on 100's of the pages despite Shahbaz being illiterate.

He was jailed in Lahore Prison and was charged under section 295-B of PPC for the crime of defiling the Quran, which is a non-bailable offence and carries the sentence of life imprisonment.

Though Reverend Shahbaz is exonerated the lopsided justice system still required him to pay a fine of 200,000 rupees (USD 2000) to be set free and allowed to return home.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6714>

Blasphemy accused Iqbal Masih got post arrest bail from court

On November 04, 2017 a case FIR was registered under section 298 PPC at Icchra Police station Lahore allegedly accusing Iqbal Masih of committing blasphemy.

He was arrested by the police on the same evening after the complaint registered by a local Mohammad Waqas Aslam against Iqbal Mash.

A Post arrest bail of Iqbal Masih on November 10, and the hearing was announced on November 13, 2017.

On November 13, 2017 Judicial Magistrate Ms Afshan Sidra Judicial Magistrate, Model Town Courts Lahore granted Iqbal Masih Post- Arrest bail on medical grounds.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6684>

Death sentenced

Three Ahmadi men sentenced to death on blasphemy charge

On October 11, 2017 a district and sessions court, Lahore sentenced three men to death on blasphemy charges. The court also fined them Rs200,000/ (\$2000/) each, but if they are unable to pay the fine, they would have to undergo six months of rigorous punishment.

In his verdict, Additional District and Sessions Judge Mian Javed Akram ruled that the three members of the Ahmadi community of Bhoaywal village near a town Sharqpur (district Shekhupura) had committed blasphemy by displaying a poster and banners at their place of worship in a manner that was offence.

Riaz Hussain, a shopkeeper, had filed a complaint against the three men at the Sharqpur police station.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1363201>

Blasphemy case registered against Nikkah officiate

On September 27, 2017, four persons (two men and two women) were arrested for their alleged conduct of mocking the religion and sentiments of Muslims. The case was registered at Khanote, district Jamshoro (Sindh) police station on the same day.

Nayab Sarkash, Abbass Ali Khoso alias Sojhro Sindhi, his daughter Sindhia and son-in-law Nazeer Ahmed Khoso, besides eight to ten unknown persons, were nominated under Section 295-A of Pakistan Penal Code.

According to the FIR, Nayab Sarkash, acting as a nikkah khwan (marriage officiate), solemnized the marriage of Sindhia with Nazeer Khoso in Zaimi village near the Manzoorabad area. Nayab Sarkash read the nikkah according to Shariat-e-Latifi [Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's canonical law.

The complainant, Assistant Sub-Inspector Bashir Ahmed Janwari, claimed the act ridiculed and profaned Shariat-e-Muhammadi (Islamic canonical law). According to him, the police came to know about the incident through social media after a video of Sarkash solemnising the nikkah spread like wildfire, drawing both condemnation and support.

The act drew condemnation from a cross-section of society on social media, Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam – Fazl (JUI-F) provincial leadership announced that they will fight a legal battle over the matter. JUI-F's followers also campaigned on the social media against what they described as an intentional derision of Islam'.

Nayab Sarkash, apparently owing to the backlash and anticipated consequences, reached out to JUI-F's provincial general secretary, Rashid Mahmood Soomro, to clarify her position. She claimed that she intended to pronounce the word Tareeqat-e-Latifi, which can be

translated as the path of Latif, but ended up mistakenly uttering the word 'Shariat'. She also apologized to the people of Sindh whose sentiments might have been hurt by her act.

After the clarification, Rashid Mahmood Soomro on September 26 gave up the call for pursuing the incident in court. He also requested his supporters via a social media message to refrain from arguing about the issue. Meanwhile, the area's police lodged the case pointing out local pressure of the residents. The investigation officer Janwri said the police are trying to arrest the other suspects who are nominated in the FIR.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1518741/blasphemy-case-registered-female-nikkah-officiate/>

Hindu Victim

Prakash Kumar held over blasphemy allegation

On January 19, 2017, a 35 years old Hindu Mr. Parkash Kumar was arrested for sending blasphemous content via WhatsApp on the complained by the locals. According to the SSP Lasbela Zia Mandokhel, a cell phone, from which the suspect allegedly shared the content, was seized and local court sent Parkesh to the jail for further investigation.

A mob gathered out side the Hub city police station demanding that Kumar be handed over to them. The crowd turned violent because of the refusal of police to hand over to them. As a result, DSP Lasbela Jan Mohammad Khosa and other officials were injured. Police dispersed the crowd using tear gas and resorted to shelling and aerial firing. Police arrested scores of protesters also.

According to SSP Mandokhel, a teenager died in the violence and had been identified as Qudratullah son of Bismillah. The boy was a resident of Pathan Colony and

became a victim of aerial firing during the clash which took place near Gaddani bus stop in Hub.

Hub Circle Deputy Sub-Inspector Police Jan Mohammad Khosa as well as Police Constable Mukhtiar Ahmed, and Additional Deputy Commissioner Tariq Javed Mengal were injured in the violence, along with an Edhi rescue official.

**<http://pakobserver.net/one-dead-violence-hindu-held-alleged-blasphemy/>
<https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/violence-erupts-in-hub-as-police-refuse-to-hand-hindu-man-suspected-of-blasphemy-over-to-enraged-mob.493603/>**

Christian Victims

Mukhtar Masih arrested after derogatory letter pinned to Masjid

On January 28, 2017, 70 years old Christian Mr. Mukhtar Masih was arrested over a blasphemy allegation from a village Lambawali near Gujranwala (Punjab).

According to the family, local Muslims alleged that he had written blasphemous messages. Police registered an FIR 49/17 against Mukhtar under section 295 A and 298 PPC. Police arrested all the family members including Mukhtar, his daughter 38 years Shaima, son Najam Mukhtar (40) and grand children Romilla (14), Nehmmya (10) and Shaima (8).

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/70-year-old-christian-man-arrested-and-detained-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-gujranwala>

A Christian arrested over blasphemy allegations in Lahore

Ashfaq Masih (Christian bicycle mechanic) was arrested on June 15, 2017 over allegations of blasphemy in Lahore, after a dispute regarding payment for services rendered to a customer.

Ashfaq Masih demanded Rs 35-40 for his services provided to his client Mohammad Ashfaq. Mohammad Ashfaq asked to reduce the amount; however the disagreement turned into a heated argument.

According to an activist Napoleon Qayyum, while a crowd gathered there to see what was going on, some individuals accused of committing blasphemy. Police arrested Ashfaq Masih and shifted to the Green Town police station. Station House Officer (SHO), Green Town, Wasim Akhtar confirmed that blasphemy case had been registered against Ashfaq Masih on June 15, 2017 after his arrest.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Jun-2017/christian-mechanic-arrested-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-lahore>

Christian boy arrested on blasphemy charge

On July 14, 2017, in a town Dinga of Kharian tehsil of district Gujrat (Punjab), a case was registered against a Christian Mr. Shahzad (a Christian) under blasphemy charges (section 295-c PPC).

Nadeem Ahmed, owner of an electric shop in Dinga town, lodged a complaint with police that his friend Ishtiaq Ahmed Jalali had told him that a sweeper working at a private hospital had allegedly uttered provocative remarks about the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Nadeem claimed that when he spoke to the sweeper to verify the allegation, the latter repeated the remarks.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1345447/christian-man-arrested-on-blasphemy-charge-in-gujrat>

Illiterate Christian boy, forced to confess “blasphemy” to escape mob violence

On August 12, 2017, a Christian illiterate and slightly mentally challenged boy Asif Stephen was arrested for allegedly burning the pages of a Quran. The incident took place in the remote village of Jamkay Cheema, district Gujranwala.

According to the reports, Stephen was buying a few household goods a man Muhammad Nawaz (known as Majhoo) grabbed him. Majhoo shouted and gathered passersby alleging Stephen that he had broken the money collection box in the shrine of sufi saint, Pir Sandhay Shah.

As the mob gathered, Mejhoo incited the people claiming that Stephen had burnt the pages of the Holy Quran. People started beating Stephen. He was taken into custody of police. An FIR was registered in Alipur Chutha police station.

According to Mr. Waheed Masih (an Uncle of Stephen), right after the incident, locals told that burnt pages of Holy Quran were found about two weeks earlier outside the shrine. Majhoo took the pages to several people. According to the locals, Majhoo informed them that he was told to bury those pages, as no one knew who had burnt them.

According to sources, Majhoo collects used bottles and sells boiled corn. Asif also collects used bottles. Some cited a business rivalry reason for the allegation.

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/08/pakistan-illiterate-christian-boy-16-forced-confess-blasphemy-escaping-mob-violence/>

Two minor janitors of Christian and Hindu faith

On September 28, 2017 two minors sweepers Vishal Masih (Christian) and Bhola Ram (Hindu) were booked in a blasphemy case after allegedly being accused of burning pages of Quranic verses. An FIR (1014/2017) was registered at Police station Bunga Dhongha, Bahawalnagar (South

Punjab). Vishal and Bhola were employed as cleaners at Civil hospital, Dunga Bhonga, Bahawalnagar.

The complainant (a policeman) claimed that the incident happened on September 27, 2017. After being informed, he arrived at the scene and witnessed a large crowd gathered who detailed the incident to him. He claims that the incident was also brought to the notice of a doctor of the Civil Hospital who filed a complaint in the police station however, withheld the information about burning of Quranic verses.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6636>

Bail

Councillor granted bail

On August 16, 2017, a councillor was released by the district and sessions court of Chitral (district capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). He was arrested on the charges of pelting stones on a religious school (Madrassa).

Councillor was brought to his hometown of Drosh in a procession of people and garlanded upon arrival at his home.

According to the coordinator for the Community Policing Forum (CPF) Irshad Mukarar on July 7, 2017, hundreds of people took to the streets in the Drosh town against prolonged power outages. Later, the local police registered a case against the youth councilor on the charge of pelting stones on a madrassa during the protest demonstration. He said when he approached the SHO of the Drosh police station after receiving complaints from the mother of the youth councilor, the SHO said a particular group of religious clerics had come to him and wanted to get a case registered against the youth councilor on the charge of blasphemy. Elaborating the matter, the SHO said after the protest against prolonged load shedding in the Drosh town some children had pelted stones on the house of a union

council (UC) Nazim (Chairman of Union Council)belonging to a religious party. Using his political affiliation, the UC Nazim wanted to get the youth councillor booked in a blasphemy case.¶

Mr Mukarar added: The SHO candidly told me that if he did not register a case against the youth councillor the particular group of religious leaders would launch propaganda against him.

<http://www.chitraltoday.net/youth-councillor-wrongly-booked-for-blasphemy-granted-bail/>

Acquittal

Supreme courts acquitted blasphemy accused citing lack of evidence

On June 7, 2017, the Supreme Court acquitted, a blasphemy accused, Mr. Mushtaq, who was facing life imprisonment on allegations of desecrating the Holy Quran.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Asif Saeed Khosa and comprising Justice Dost Mohammad Khan and Justice Qazi Faez Isa issued the order after hearing the prosecution and defendant's lawyer.

After examining the record and hearing the defendant's arguments, the court ruled that the prosecution's version, prima facie, appeared to be false.

It noted that the complainant may even have brought previously burnt pages of the Holy Quran to the accused's house in a bid to influence the case.

The court subsequently issued the order to absolve the defendant of all charges, citing a lack of substantial and credible evidence.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1338034/supreme-court-acquits-blasphemy-accused-citing-lack-of-evidence>

Extra-judicial killing

Three sisters kill Fazal Abbas booked for blasphemy in Sialkot

On April 19, 2017 three armed burqa-clad sisters Amna, Afshan and Razia shot dead Mr. Fazal Abass in a village Nangal Mirza, Tehsil Pasrur district Sialkot. The sisters claimed that Fazal had committed blasphemy 13 years ago.

According to the police, three women went to the house of Mazhar Hussain Syed, a faith healer and asked him to pray for them. They asked him if his son Abass had returned from abroad. On knowing that Fazal had returned from Belgium, they asked if they could see him. As Fazal Abass appeared before the women, they opened fire on him with the weapons they carried with them. Fazal died on the spot.

The women, in their statement to police, alleged that Abbas had committed blasphemy in 2004, but we couldn't kill him at the time because we were too young then.

The police confirmed that they had registered a case against Abbas in 2004 under Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code at the Pasrur City station, but he fled abroad soon after.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1328114/three-sisters-kill-man-booked-for-blasphemy-in-sialkot>

Mashal Khan lynched and shot over blasphemy

Mr. Mashal Khan (23), a sixth semester student of the BS journalism programme at Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan was stripped, shot, thrown from the second floor of the hostel and brutally beaten to death by a mob for alleged blasphemy..

The incident caused an outrage across the country, with calls for the blasphemy law to be amended. The investigation into Mashal's murder was concluded after a joint investigation team probing the case cleared him of all blasphemy charges.

Responding to a question, the minister said the government would ensure that the blasphemy law was not misused and those doing so were brought to justice.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1327136>

Death Sentence

Death penalty for blasphemy on Facebook

On June 10, 2017, An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) judge Shabir Ahmed sentenced Mr. Taimoor Raza (30) to death for sharing blasphemous content about Islam on social media in Bahawalpur (South Punjab).

Taimoor Raza belongs to Shia community from Okara (a district city of central Punjab). He was arrested by Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) a year ago. He was accused of posting derogatory content against prominent Sunni religious figures and the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his wives on Facebook.

A case was registered against him on behalf of the State at CTD Multan police station under Section 295-C and Sections 9 and 11w of the Anti-Terrorism Act (which deal with whipping up sectarian hatred).

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1338684>

Senators call for amending blasphemy law

Senators on April 17, 2017 called for amending the blasphemy law to provide for punishments to those who concoct blasphemy accusations against others and demanded a campaign against those taking the law into their hands.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1327674/senators-call-for-amending-blasphemy-law>

Misuse of blasphemy law will not be allowed

Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Mohammad Yousaf said that blasphemy by anyone cannot be

condoned but no-one will be allowed to take the law into his own hands.

Talking to journalists at Gurdwara Punja Sahib in Hassanabdal on April, 15, 2017, he condemned the lynching of Mashal Khan, a student at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, adding that a report sought from the authorities concerned to ensure that no such incidents took place in future.

Responding to a question, the minister said the government would ensure that the blasphemy law was not misused and those doing so were brought to justice.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1327136>

IHC suggests changes in blasphemy laws to stop its misuse

A court in Pakistan asked the government to make changes in the controversial blasphemy laws to stop its misuse for personal interests and fix tougher punishment for any person falsely accusing someone of the crime, which is punishable by death. Islamabad High Court Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui issued a verdict on August 11, 2017 in the case regarding elimination of blasphemous content from social media.

In the 116-page detailed judgment, Justice Siddiqui suggested that parliament make the blasphemy law tougher by fixing the same punishment for any person misusing it or falsely accusing someone of blasphemy, Dawn reported on August 12, 2017.

http://timesofahmad.blogspot.com/2017/08/pakistan-court-suggests-changes-in.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+rss-ahmadiyyatimes+%28The+Times+of+Ahmad+-+Daily+e-Digest%29

Blasphemy laws should also protect minority religion

There is a need to promote tolerance and coexistence in society. If incorporating blasphemy in the cybercrime law is necessary, religious minorities and their revered personalities should also be protected. This was stated by Members National Assembly Shazia Marri and Ali Raza Abdi during a meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Information Technology on May 9, 2017.

[https://www.dawn.com/news/1332182/blasphemy-law-should-also-protect-minority-religions\](https://www.dawn.com/news/1332182/blasphemy-law-should-also-protect-minority-religions)

Threat

Using Blasphemy allegation as a threat

A Christian woman Kiran Catherine D/o Goga Masih married a Muslim Rahim Ullah Khan after converting to Islam. On September 30, 2017 kiran came to her parents and demanded her share in property. Kiran and her husband threatened her family for lodging a blasphemy case against the family if their demand was not fulfilled.

On October 1, 2017 Kiran filed an application against her six brothers in the local police station Qutab Pura. According to Pervaiz Masih (elder brother of Kiran), police asked his family to cooperate with the Kiran and threatened to register a blasphemy case otherwise. CCJP staff is trying to solve the case with mutual understanding.

CCJP chapter, Multan

Victims of blasphemy laws in 2017

Sr.	Name	Gender	District	Section	Date	Allegation	Status	Source
Muslim: victims of blasphemy laws								
01	Mashal Khan (a student of Abdul Wali Khan University)	Male	Mardan (KP)	--	13/04/17	Allegedly "publishing blasphemous content online	Beaten to death	https://www.dawn.com/news/1337373
02	Nayab Sarkash, Abbass Ali Khoso alias Sojtro Sindhi, his daughter Sindhia and son-in-law Nazeer Ahmed Khoso.	2 male & 2 female	Khanote station, Jamshoro district (Sindh)	295-A	27/09/17	Read the nikkah according to Shariat-e-Latifi (Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's canonical law). So, the act ridiculed and profaned Shariat-e-Muhammadi (Islamic canonical law)	Arrested	https://tribune.com.pk/story/1518741/blasphemous-case-registered-female-nikkah-officiate/
03	Saiman Haider, Asim Saeed, Ahmed Waqas Goraya, Ahmed Raza Naseer	5 male	Karachi	295-A, 295-B, 295-C, 298, 298-A, 298-B, 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code read with Section 11 of Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 (PECA), and Sections 6(f), 7(h), 8 & 9 of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997.	19/03/17	Published blasphemous material on the social media.	Arrested, then released	http://nation.com.pk/slamabad/13-Sep-2017/four-indicted-for-publishing-blasphemous-material
04	Syed Ahsan Shah	Male	Haripur, KPK	295-A	30/10/17	Uploaded blasphemous matter on a social networking site	Arrested, then bailed	https://tribune.com.pk/story/1520517/youth-booked-blasphemy-haripur/

Christian victims of blasphemy laws									
01	Ashtaq Masih (35 yrs)	Male	Marium Green Colony, Lahore	295-C	15/06/17	Accusations of blasphemy after he became a part of a quarrel in respect to payment for services with a customer	Arrested	http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Jun-2017/christian-mechanic-arrested-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-lahore	
02	Mukhtar Masih (69 yrs)	Male	Lambanwali distt. Gujranwala	295-A & 298-A	26/01/17	Wrote blasphemous letters containing derogatory comments towards Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) and the Quran were received by Qadri Shahbaz Hussain Imam of Gulzar Mosque	Arrested(FIR# 49/17)/bailed on 24 th April, 2017/died	http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?newsid=6459	
03	Shahzad (16 yrs)	Male	Dinga distt. Gujrat	295-C	13/07/17	Allegedly using derogatory remarks against the prophet Mohammad (PBUH)	Arrested (FIR # 273/17)	http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?newsid=6556	
04	Asif s/o Stephen (18)	Male	JanKay Cheema distt. Gujranwala	295-B	12/08/17	Burned pages of the Holy Quran	Arrested	https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/08/pakistan-iliterate-christian-boy-16-forced-confess-blasphemy-escaping-mob-violence/	
05	Vishal Masih	Male	Dunga, Bhongha, Bahawalnagar	295-B	27/09/17	Burned sacred pages of Quranic Verses	Arrested	http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?newsid=6636	
06	Iqbal Masih	Male	Icchra, Lahore	298	4/11/17	Committing blasphemy	Post arrested bailed	http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?newsid=6684	

Hindu: victims of blasphemy laws							
01	Parkash Kumar (36)	Male	Hub, Lasbela	295-A & 295-C	04/05/17	Sharing a picture containing allegedly blasphemous content on WhatsApp	Arrested https://www.dawn.com/news/1331035
02	Bhola Ram	Male	Dunga, Bhongha, Bahawalnagar	295-B	27/09/17	Burned sacred pages of Quranic Verses	Arrested http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?newsid=6636

Victims of blasphemy laws 2017 (Summary)

Religion	Victim
Muslims	11
Christians	6
Hindus	2
Total	19



Crimes Against Women

Crimes Against Women

Equality before the Law

- ❖ State parties shall accord to women equality with men before law.
- ❖ State parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equality in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.
- ❖ State parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.
- ❖ State parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

(Article 15 (1,2,3 and 4) CEDAW)

1. All citizens are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of law.
2. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.

Constitution of Pakistan (Article 25)

Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

State parties condemn discrimination against women in all forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

- ❖ To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise
- ❖ To take appropriate measures, including legislation to modify, or abolish existing laws, regulation, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women.

- ❖ To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

Full participation of women in national life

- ❖ Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.

The constitution of Pakistan (Article 34)

Report: Commission of Inquiry for women –Pakistan, 1997

As an acknowledgment of the seriousness of the issue, the law in Pakistan has recently been amended to introduce the death penalty for gang rape. Its effectiveness and impact is yet to be seen. Legislation, however strong, is never sufficient in itself. It must be accompanied by programs to change the attitude and perception prevalent in the patriarchal society, as well as the will to strictly implement the law.

(Report on the commission of Inquiry for women Pakistan 1997, P 82)

CM Punjab inaugurates „Violence against Women Centre“

In an initiative for the protection of women against persecution, the Punjab government established a Violence against Women Centre (VAWC) in Mulan which started functioning on March 25, 2017.

The center would also offer services of first aid, FIR lodging, police reporting, prosecution, medical exam and treatment, psychological evaluation and counseling as well as post-trauma rehabilitation,

<http://nation.com.pk/national/26-Mar-2017/cm-punjab-inaugurates-violence-against-women-center>

Rape

Christian minor sexually assaulted

On December 17, 2016 a Christian minor child Saiba (3) d/o Shafqat Masih and Catherine Bibi sustained severe injuries after being sexually assaulted by a Muslim Muhammad Abbas (friend of her elder brother, Altaf) in Bahawalnagar (South Punjab).the victim child was admitted in the local hospital.

On the day of occurrence, at around 9 in the morning when Saiba and Daud (her brother) were alone at home as the parents were at their workplaces. Muhamamd Abbas went to Altaf's house. He gave Daud some money and sent him to nearby shop to buy some candies for themselves. Abbas then raped Saiba and left her in an unconscious state and fled.

When Daud returned, he saw his sister in a critical condition and approached the neighbors for help. The victim child underwent a surgery and received seven stitches. The doctors told the family that the victim will no longer be able to bear children in future because of the severe assault.

An FIR was registered against Muhammad Abbas. The culprit was later arrested by the police; however the family was being pressurized to compromise.

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/bahawalnagar-christian-minor-sexually-assaulted-sustains-severe-injuries/>

Kidnap

Protest against landlord for kidnapping two Hindu Kohli women

In Hyderabad (Sindh), landlord Zaheer Mirani resident of Shaikh Bhirko (District Tando Muhammad Khan) reportedly kidnapped two Hindu kohli women SoomriKohli and WaliKohli.

The landlord had displaced peasants Kheerokohli, WamanoKohli and ChanoKohli from his land depriving them of their share of standing crops..on June 9, 2017, when the peasants protested against the tyranny of the landlord, he kidnapped their two women.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6497>

False allegations

Three poor and innocent Christian women arrested in murder case

On July 4, 2017, three Christian women (Zeenat, Kiran and Nasreen)and a man (Danish) were picked up for interrogation regarding the murder of a disabled woman and her daughter-in-law inBismillah Town residence located in Latifabad Unit-10, Hyderabad.

Nafeesa Bano, and her son's wife, Faryal Qureshi, were found murdered on July 3, 2017. The male suspect, Danish, was said to be a friend of Faryal's husband, Raheel.



The three suspected women were picked up from Christian Colony, Latifabad Unit-5 on July 4. According to police, their names were mentioned as suspects by the heirs of the deceased women.

One of the women was a maid servant and another had got her job at Raheel's house; the case is now being investigated from another angle, according to the source.

An FIR (70/17) was registered at the B-Section police station of Latifabad on the complaint of Dildar Hussain Qureshi. According to Dildar husband of Nafisa Bibi, these three women may be involved in this double murder, so police nominated three Christian and one-man Ubaid Ullah Danish.

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6542&https://www.dawn.com/news/1343690>

Mehwish & her father faced false allegation

On November 20, 2016, a Christian girl, Mehwish and her father Baber was accused of stealing jewelry worth 16 Lakh, from the house of a Muslim family in Kamal pur, Faisalabad, where the girl worked as a domestic worker. She was reportedly trapped in the case by some other Muslim domestic co-worker who had eloped with her beloved and was the prime suspect in the case. She diverted the attention of her employer and implicated Mehwish in the case.

A case was registered under section 381 of PPC against the alleged accusers. During the interrogation, they were threatened, tortured and kept in illegal detention at her employers' house. She was also kept hungry during the investigation. Her father, after being in detention for 10 days was released.

On January 5, 2017, CCJP (Faisalabad) filed a writ petition against Habeas Corpus. As a result, Mehwish was left near her house. She was presented in Session court where she recorded her statement against her illegal detention. CCJP

also filed in the court for her pre-arrest bail.

CCJP Faisalabad

For the past several decades, minorities — including those belonging to the Christian, Hindu and Ahmedi communities — have faced harsh discrimination at the hands of both state and society. Members of these communities have been forced to deal with the deaths of their loved ones over the petty disputes, which take on a religious hue.

In such a context, it was commendable of the Sindh Assembly to pass a bill on forced conversions a few months ago — even though it couldn't be finally enforced due to the concerns raised by religious clerics and certain state officials. Despite that, the successful passage of the Hindu Marriage Bill by both the national and Sindh assemblies recently is a landmark achievement. Such legislation is also needed to extend constitutional protection and safeguards to other minority communities in a society that is increasingly fundamentalist and obscurantist.

It is unfortunate that Pakistan is still haunted by senseless policies adopted in the 1970s and 1980s that led to the rise of a virulent religion-based populism. The alleged actions of the public prosecutor in the Youhanabad lynching case are a result of such policies, which made deep inroads into the fabric of society.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, if he is to live up to the image that he wants to create of being a supporter of a tolerant and inclusive Pakistan, should take notice of such matters as a matter of the utmost priority. The younger Sharif who runs the Punjab province has even a greater responsibility to act. Christians have been continuously targeted under his watch exposing the much-hyped claims of 'good governance'. *

[Http://dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/31-Mar-17/stop-harrassing-minorities](http://dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/31-Mar-17/stop-harrassing-minorities)

Recommendations

Expressing our firm belief in the people of Pakistan, their potentials and a dignified future, the National Commission for Justice and Peace would like to reiterate the recommendations made in the previous years. We believe them to be important to deal with the problems highlighted in the reports and building a culture of justice and peace.

The challenges and general political atmosphere needs a lot of improvement. For religious minorities of Pakistan, changes in laws and public policies are necessary to ensure the restoration of the civil, political, social and economic rights for all citizens.

National Human Rights Institutions and Human Rights observance

1. We strongly urge the Government to constitute an impartial and independent Commission of inquiry to study the situation of the religious minorities and make recommendations to the Government and the people of Pakistan.

Religious Discrimination

2. We strongly recommend a constitutional arrangement outlawing religious discrimination which implies an outright rejection of religious discrimination through constitutional amendment and establishing institutions to monitor the implementation of non discrimination as state policy.
3. Life, liberty, well-being and properties, places of worship and graveyards should be protected proactively.
4. Religious minorities should be saved from assimilation by upgrading their social and economic status through affirmative action. This implies providing sufficient opportunities for admission in the colleges and universities and reservations of quota and employment.

Religious Freedom

5. The government should provide an equal ground for all religious communities in the media, education and other spheres of national life for propagation of their faith. The law must take its course and justice should be ensured in all incidents, which pose threats to religious freedom of the citizens of Pakistan. Stopping state agencies and non-state actors from interfering with people's right to religious freedom would be an imperative.

Hate Speech

6. The laws meant to maintain peace and harmony must be properly implemented.
7. The steps such as stopping provocation through loud speakers banning extremist outfits, and seizing the hate mongering literature must be intensified, evaluated and their success must be ensured.

Discriminatory legislation

8. We demand an amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan so that it acknowledges the diversity (multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-national and multi-ethnic and linguistic status) of the Pakistani society. The Constitution must make no preferences among the citizens on the basis of religion. Therefore; we demand repeal of Article 2, Article 31, Article 31-D, Article 41, Article 203, Article 203 A-J, Article 227 and Article 260.
9. We demand a repeal of all legislation that is discriminatory which has been proven to be unjust namely Hudood Ordinance, Blasphemy laws (section 295 B, C and 298 A, B and C), law of Evidence, Shariat Act 1991, Qanoon-e-Shahadat and Qisas and diyat Ordinance.

10. We also demand abolition of policies styled on the religious basis for example the granting of 20 extra marks for the ability to memorize the Holy Quran by Heart (Hafiz) six months rebate to prisoners on learning the Holy Quran and visit of the Government functionaries to religious sites on the state expenses or award same privilege to members of minority communities if they fulfill their respective religious requirements.
11. We strongly urge the Government that prohibition laws should be revised on the basis of logic and present realities of the Pakistani society, rather than any religious interpretation.

Blasphemy laws

12. a) Besides repeal or thorough amendment of the Blasphemy laws to stop the massive abuse, we demand that the Government should pay an appropriate compensation to the victims of Blasphemy laws for their economic, social and psychological losses.
- b) The government should also commission a study to bring together a comprehensive data on the efforts of blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

Crimes against women

13. We demand that a legal protection and remedy should be provided against forced conversions.

Land grabbing and evictions

14. Protection of Communal Properties Ordinance 2002 should be discussed and tables in the parliament for enactment. Moreover its implementation in letter and spirit must be ensured so that it does not become a source of nuisance. Each case of land grabbing of communal property must be properly dealt with and punished in accordance with law.
15. We urge the Government to consider allotment of land, for housing, places of worship, community gatherings, graveyards and agriculture to all members of religious minorities through affirmative action.

About the Education and Curriculum

16. Prejudice and biases on the account of religion, sect, and gender in the curriculum should be removed. The Education policy making Islamic studies compulsory with Arabic as an essential part and the choice of ethnics for Non-Muslim students isolates and enhances discrimination against the minorities. For this reason, NCJP recommends that the religious studies only be offered at college and university levels as an optional subject but not as a compulsory subject. The syllabus content should show an equal respect to all religions, or, there should be no reference to a particular religion.
17. In a multi-religious society like Pakistan, the curriculum should focus on Universal human values and the religious education can be the responsibility of the family and the respective religious community institutions. The government should arrange the religious education of the minority students of each community according to their respective faiths, which is their right under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child signed by Pakistan (1990).
18. Discriminatory policies such as awarding extra marks to Hafiz-e-Quran should be abandoned or alternative concessions should be provided to minority students.

Personal laws

19. Family or personal laws for religious minorities in Pakistan should be reviewed by a competent and representative Review Commission to check injustices against minority citizens through abuses of these laws and procedures, to see that these personal laws comply with human rights standards and prevent the overriding effect of the personal law of the majority community.
20. The application of religious laws of one group on the other will always be a problem, e.g. Huddod Ordinances, Qisas and Diyat, Law of Evidence. Moreover, the overriding effect of the Muslim personal

laws on those of religious minorities has no justification. Therefore all criminal laws based on religion should be removed and legal safeguards provided to the religious minorities against the abuse of personal laws.

21. Family laws should be enacted for Kalash and other communities who are not governed by any such laws. Sikh and Hindu Personal Laws should provide for a marriage registration/certificate.
22. In order to vitalize the institution of family and stop malpractices and enable marriage without mandatory conversions, a Common Civil Code should be enacted to make it possible for the citizens to contract a civil marriage, interfaith and otherwise.
23. The government should sponsor a training/awareness campaign on the personal laws and customs of religious minorities for subordinate judiciary and prosecution officers. Police training should include a course on the problems of religious minorities in order to sensitize them to be able to handle gross injustices to minorities.
24. A literacy drive for all the poor women, including minority women, in target areas should be commenced to address the issues of gender violence and sexual harassment.

Labour rights

25. The Bonded Labor Act 1992 and the regulations must be implemented in letter and spirit. Moreover the Brick kiln owners, landlords and other employers maintaining bonded labor must be brought to justice by the State.
26. The Government should bring a labor friendly labor policy in consultation with labor organizations.

Participation in national mainstreams

- 27.** The term minority must be used in the wider meaning and all minorities (ethnic, linguistic, national and indigenous) should be given representation in all tiers of governance and decision making
- 28.** Measures should be taken to ensure economic empowerment of all minorities through reservations of seats (quota) in Colleges, Universities and government jobs at all levels.
- 29.** The political parties must involve religious minorities in the general elections by awarding tickets to minority candidates on general seats for National and Provincial Assemblies.

Abbreviations

ASI	Assistant Sub Inspector
CIA	Central Investigation Agency
DCO	District Coordination Officer
DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police
FIR	First Information Report
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
S.A.W	Peace Be Upon Him
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code
Rs.	Rupees, Pakistani currency
SC	Supreme Court
SDM	Sub-District Magistrate
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
DPO	District Police Officer
AHRC	Asian Human Rights Commission
ATA	Anti Terrorist Act
CLAAS	Centre for Legal Aid Assistance & Settlement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIG	Deputy Inspector General of Police
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
SI	Sub-Inspector
SP	Superintendent of Police
TA	Telegraph Act
WVIP	World Vision in Progress

Glossary

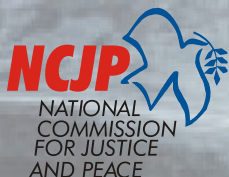
Chaudhry	A person from landed nobility
Chak	Village settlement
District	An administrative division
Federal Shariat Court	Apex court for religious matters
Masjid	Mosque
Fatwa	Religious decree by a Muslim scholar
Khatm-e-Nabuwat	Finality of Prophethood
Kalima-e-Tayyiba	Proclamation of Islamic faith, "there is no God but Allah and Muhammad (SAW) His Messenger
Majilise Khtm-e-Nabuwat	Conference of finality of Prophethood
Masih	Christ, part of the names of many Christians to show their religious identity
Panchayat	Village council
Pir	Mystic/faith healer
Shariat	Islamic Law
Madrassa	Islamic Seminary
Mohallah	Street
Muharram	Muharram is the first month of Islamic Calendar
Moulvi	Muslim Cleric
Sunnah	The way of Prophet (SAAW)
Tehsil	A sub-district, administrative division
Zakat & Usher	Islamic Taxes (levied on Muslim through an ordinance since 1979)

The National Commission for Justice and Peace is a rights' based organization of the Pakistan Catholic Bishops' Conference working since 1985 for the rights of marginalized communities and religious minorities living in Pakistan. The commission's main focus is in three thematic areas:

- Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Constitutional Discrimination; Laws and Policies
- Biased Education; Policies and Curriculum

Aims and Objectives

- To foster and defend human rights.
- To build a just, human and peaceful society.
- To publicize reflections in order to create a wider consciousness on issues of Human Rights, Justice, Peace and Social Harmony.
- To incorporate and build linkages with other like-minded organizations, Political and Religious Representatives and Government Officials.
- To create an environment of communal harmony



E-64/A, Street # 8, Officers' Colony,
Walton Road, Lahore Cantt-Pakistan
Tel: +92-42-36668692, Fax: +92-42-36655549
Email: ncjppakistan@gmail.com
Website: www.ncjppk.org