

MASSACRE OF AHMADI WORSHIPPERS DURING FRIDAY PRAYERS IN LAHORE

Eighty six Ahmadis slain, 124 injured

Lahore; May 28, 2010: In a meticulously planned attack, sectarian terrorists slaughtered Ahmadi worshippers who had assembled for the Friday prayers in two major Ahmadiyya mosques in Garhi Shahu and Model Town of Lahore. The absence of any effective police presence and the delayed intervention by them enabled the terrorists to succeed in their gory operation, as planned. According to the final count, based on burial statistics, 86 worshippers died. One hundred and twenty four were injured.

One Christian, who worked at the Ahmadiyya complex in Garhi Shahu, also died in the attack.

This was the single most barbaric attack on the Ahmadiyya community; more people were killed in a single day than in the past 16 years put together.

The dead include Judge ® Munir Ahmad Sheikh the Amir of the Lahore Ahmadiyya community, Major General ® Nasir Ahmad, president of the Model Town chapter, Mr. Mahmud Shad, a missionary, Mr. Ejaz Nasrulla, a nephew of Late Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, former President of the International Court of Justice at Den Haag and a number of community officials.

The attacks were timed to be simultaneous. Two or three attackers targeted the Model Town mosque while a larger contingent attacked the Garhi Shahu mosque. The terrorists killed or injured the small number of community guards and stormed the main assembly halls. When inside, the attackers used hand grenades and sprayed bullets indiscriminately at the worshippers. At Garhi Shahu they had plenty of time to expend their ammunition. More casualties occurred when they blew themselves up. It is confirmed by those who survived the massacre in Garhi Shahu that the terrorists faced little resistance from the police during the attack, and had sufficient time to even examine the apparently dead bodies in the main hall and kill those who were still alive. They shouted slogans of *Khatme Nabuwwat Zindah Baad*, (Long live - End of Prophethood). According to the count of shells recovered from the site almost all bullets scored a casualty.

Eventually the police arrived in numbers and apparently took their time to ensure a safe and smooth intervention. As a result, little timely rescue and evacuation efforts were made, which resulted in the death of many injured due to excessive loss of blood. In its editorial on May 29, 2010, the daily Dawn posed the question: *If television crews can reach the scene of an attack before police reinforcement what does that say about the administration's state of preparedness?*

The attack commenced in Garhi Shahu at 13:40, and the police eventually entered the mosque at 16:10. As such the terrorists had two and half hours to finish the job in hand. Rana Sanaullah a provincial minister admitted in a TV program that these attacks were the consequence of negligence of the security personnel.

Two terrorists were apprehended by Ahmadis in the Model Town mosque, stopping them from blowing themselves up. This contained the damage. They were handed over to the police. According to one report, this is the first time in Pakistan that armed suicide bombers have been captured while in action.

Some TV news channels reported that Tehrik Taliban Punjab claimed the responsibility of the attacks. The police have disclosed that one of the captured terrorists is a resident of district Rahim Yar Khan in the southern Punjab. According to ANI, a self-proclaimed spokesperson of TTP said on May 30: *"On the whole, we do like to encourage the nation for increasing such activities, like targeted killings of qadianis, shias, the political parties that support them, as well as law enforcing agencies, the Pakistan Army and other racist parties."*

Soon after the attack, over 90 graves were dug up in a graveyard at Rabwah. The martyrs were buried after their funeral prayers in groups. Seventy-eight burials took place in Rabwah. The program of a joint burial ceremony was abandoned for security concerns.

As a mark of respect for the martyrs, the market, traders and other shops in Rabwah remained closed on May 29. The community, however, did not take to the streets, take out processions or stage a

protest in Rabwah or anywhere else. It is not the practice with Ahmadis. Instead, they turned to God and prayed for themselves and the countrymen in general. They were guided by a statement from their supreme leader, the Khalifa tul Masih V: ***“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat is a peace loving true Muslim Jamaat. Thus there will be no improper reaction from any Ahmadi. Our salvation lies in our supplication to God Almighty and we believe that He has, and always will, help us”***. The head of the Pakistani community, Mirza Khurshid Ahmad echoed the same sentiment in a press conference on May 29.

The BBC quoted Rana Sanaullah, a provincial minister that the terrorists had stayed in Raiwind at a location from where groups make sorties for *Tabligh* (preaching) to spread the message of Allah; their handlers took them from there to the targeted locations. Raiwind was named as the town where the terrorists stayed for many days.

Hate banners against Ahmadis remain in Lahore, and the authorities take no notice of them. On the day of the attack, these could be seen in Garhi Shahu and the Mall Road, the main shopping mall of Lahore.

This incident has evoked unequivocal condemnation from all sections of the society in Pakistan, including politico-religious parties. International human rights groups condemned the attacks.

United Nations experts issued a statement that ***“they were appalled by and strongly condemn today’s targeted killings of at least 70 members of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan. There is real risk that similar violence might happen again unless advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence is adequately addressed.”*** This is something that the federal and provincial governments should have done decades ago.

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon strongly condemned the attacks. He said that for long Ahmadis have been exposed to the risk of violence and discrimination.

A US State Department spokesman told reporters that the attacks were a brutal form of violence against innocent civilians.

The US Commission of International Religious Freedom minced no words: ***“USCIRF condemns this monstrous act of violence against a peaceful religious community and extends its condolence to the families of the victims. This is just one more example of the results of ongoing intimidation, thuggish threats and violence against the Ahmadi community in Pakistan. The Taliban-associated extremists find cover in the anti-Ahmadi laws in the Constitution.”***

European Union diplomatic chief Catherine Ashton said that she was appalled by the attack.

The Head of International Committee of the Red Cross - South Asia said, “The attacks are highly alarming and unacceptable.”

The U.S. Embassy in Pakistan strongly condemned the terrorist attacks at Garhi Shahu and Model Town, Lahore. U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson said, “Cowardly assaults on people at prayer are attacks against people of all faiths.” Pakistan has witnessed an increase in “provocative statements that promote intolerance and are an incitement to extremist violence,” she added. “Attacks by extremists on religious minorities in Pakistan undermine the building of a tolerant, democratic society; we send our condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of those who lost their lives,” conveyed the press release of the US embassy.

The Asian Human Rights Commission issued a detailed statement on the plight of Ahmadis in Pakistan and the government’s lack of concern towards this issue. The AHRC urged the international community to take notice. (*Immediate Release of AHRC on May 29, 2010*)

CNN aired a statement from Human Rights Commission of Pakistan that it had warned the Punjab provincial government about threats to the Ahmadiyya Community Center in Model Town for more than a year.

Ms Farzana Bari of HRCP was forthright in a private TV talk-show that the state of Pakistan itself was primarily responsible for the Lahore tragedy, as the country’s laws and constitutional amendment provided incentive to extremists to undertake violence against Ahmadis.

While addressing a press conference, Ms Hina Jilani, Advocate, a human rights activist, demanded an immediate and independent enquiry as to why adequate security arrangements were not

made subsequent to warnings from intelligence agencies. She also demanded effective action against those elements who promote hate against Ahmadis.

On June 3, 2010, the National Assembly, urged by its women members (Sherry Rehman of PPP and others from ANP and MQM), condemned the killing of Ahmadis, in a resolution. The Senate could not muster this courage, for fear of possible ire of hard-line Anti-Ahmadi religious groups, according to a press report.

It should be mentioned that neither the President, the Prime Minister nor the Sharif brothers considered it necessary to visit the Ahmadiyya centre in Lahore, the targeted places of worship or the injured in hospitals. A press release was apparently sufficient to convey their concern. Mr. I.A. Rehman of the HRCP commented in his column in the Dawn of June 3, 2010: *“That the higher authorities could not muster the courage to visit the hospital and console the injured, points to the roots of discrimination and prejudice against the Ahmadis.”*

However, Governor Taseer visited both Ahmadiyya centres, and Mr. Rehman Malik the Interior Minister visited the injured in a hospital.

The role of Pakistan’s electronic media deserves mention. Most of the news channels covered the story ‘live’ as the mayhem continued for about three hours. However, the religious prejudice of some of the newscasters and anchors was evident throughout.

Almost all reporters at the scene of the attack took care not to refer to the Ahmadis’ congregation as Friday prayers, although the law does not prohibit them doing so.

A TV channel chose to refer to the victims as a ‘religious minority sect’ as opposed to the term Ahmadis. Mulla Ibtisam Ilahi Zaheer had the audacity to call Ahmadis *Wajib ul Qatl* (must be killed). One newscaster told his viewers that the Ahmadi dead will be taken to Chiniot for burial. He was reluctant to say Rabwah, even Chenab Nagar. The press conference of an Ahmadi leader was attended by reporters from a number of TV channels, but none of them exercised their media freedom or showed the courage to air the program. A PTV commentator expressed the view that the police intervention was very successful and the arrangements in hospitals were excellent. He was perhaps unaware that in some hospitals mortuaries ran short of space to place the dead bodies, so these could not be unloaded from ambulances and the authorities urged the relatives to take them away for burial. The commentator was also ignorant of the fact that the provincial Secretary of Interior had strongly criticized the performance of the law-enforcing agencies. (*The daily Jang; May 29, 2010*)

The print media reported the tragedy correctly, including the vernacular dailies. Almost all the Urdu newspapers published at Lahore issued special editions on May 29. The English newspapers reported the event in detail and made positive editorial comments. An op-ed from the Daily Times of June 1 is referred to. The article analyses the issue of the Second Amendment objectively and proposes a remedy. It is not only readable, it is actionable.

The federal government and human rights groups have confirmed that the provincial government had been informed before hand of terrorist threat to the Ahmadiyya community. The Federal Interior Minister disclosed that the province had been warned of such an eventuality on May 13 and May 26. The Ahmadiyya headquarters had kept the provincial and federal governments regularly informed of the activities and public threats issued by anti-Ahmadiyya clerics, and expressed grave concern about probability of the sort of tragedy that eventually materialised in Lahore.

Ismail Khan, in his column in the Dawn of May 30, 2010 made a penetrating and apt observation: *Dozens of police men armed with semi-automatic weapons and guns were seen rushed to the scenes of the blood bath. They were seen huddled together either behind a wall or some other cover, without firing a single bullet. ... And then to cap it all the celebratory gunfire by the Lahore police, which has now become their hall mark, every time they finish their job. What was there to celebrate? The death of seventy-nine people???*

Many people pointed out once again that the Lahore tragedy has its roots in the way the state of Pakistan discriminates against Ahmadis. The Asian Human Rights Commission, Amnesty International Pakistan, the UN experts and numerous column-writers in Pakistan directly or indirectly conveyed that the legal sanction provided to discrimination against Ahmadis is the cause of the hatred that has led to this

massacre, and there is a serious risk of the Lahore tragedy being repeated. Khalifatul Masih V, Head of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat summed this up in his statement: **“The situation in Pakistan is extremely grave. For decades Ahmadi Muslims have not been able to live in peace, in fact they live their lives in constant danger. In 1974 Ahmadi Muslims were declared non-Muslim by the Government of Pakistan and then ten years later the infamous Ordinance XX was adopted which criminalized all forms of Ahmadi worship and the practice of its faith. These laws effectively legitimized the exclusion and persecution of our Jamaat in Pakistan. Ever since, extremists have taken advantage and targeted Ahmadis....”**

The Lahore tragedy produced numerous incidents that will go down in history regarding Ahmadis’ faith in God, spirit of sacrifice, resignation to Allah’s will, community service in a crisis situation, courage, etc. Some of these were mentioned by the Khalifa-tul-Masih V in his Friday sermon on June 4, 2010.

The Khalifa-tul-Masih V, in his speech took a lenient view of the young terrorists who were misled to act like robots, and he called their sponsors and handlers the main culprits. He urged government leaders to undo the constitutional and legal provisions against Ahmadis. He was of the view that the Chief Justice should have taken *suo motu* notice of the massacre (to pinpoint the source of the malady and take remedial action).

This report will not be complete without mentioning:

- One martyred youth was the only son of his parents.
- A couple had two sons; both died in the attack.
- The tragedy created a number of young widows and orphans.
- A dying Ahmadi, asked those present to recite *Darud* (blessings on the Holy Prophet Muhammad PBUH).
- The professionalism, thoroughness and ferocity of the terrorist action at Garhi Shahu mosque reminds one of a similar attack in Bombay in November 2008.

Two days after the Lahore incident, a religious fanatic Abid Butt in District Narowal jumped into the courtyard of an Ahmadi and stabbed him to death. He stated that a mulla had told him that to kill an Ahmadi was an act of great religious merit.

Post-script

An account of the attacks in Lahore is given above. It is based upon early reports received within a week of the tragedy. Further information became available in the following weeks through eyewitness accounts, personal narratives, media reports, op-eds etc and is recorded below.

The events of May 28, 2010 which resulted in 86 deaths and over a hundred injured were not a sudden occurrence – tensions had been building for some time and authorities were well aware of this. An elderly (Ahmadi) doctor who witnessed the attacks said, “Prior to the event, we had written several letters to the Punjab government regarding threats from TTP, Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah Sahabah. The Punjab Government’s reaction was to ignore this or do nothing at all.” *Op-ed in The Friday Times of June 4, 2010*

No more than two cops were stationed at the Model Town mosque and four at the Garhi Shahu mosque, despite clear and repeated warning from intelligence agencies that Ahmadis were now a priority target of terrorists.

One observer reported that whenever he went to pray on Fridays to the Model Town mosque, he found the official security men in their *dhotis* and slippers, smoking *hookahs*. *The Dawn; June 7, 2010*

Approximately seven weeks earlier, three Ahmadis were murdered in Faisalabad in a targeted killing. The daily Dawn subsequently investigated the incident in depth and published a report under the title: **“Govt silence sounds death knell for Faisalabad Ahmadis”** (*The Dawn; April 17, 2010*). A louder death knell was heard on May 28 in Lahore – the centre of “government silence.”

A week after the Lahore massacre, the Multan police provided, as usual, two police constables for the security of the main Ahmadiyya mosque in the city. Obviously they had received no fresh orders from Lahore, nor were the senior police officers in Multan aware of the new dimensions of the terror threat. Or they simply had no desire to be effective. Acolytes of Pir Sheikh Amin of Multan remain aggressive and ready to indulge in violence against Ahmadis. He has mustered a large following who go about violating the writ of the government. The authorities remain unwilling to apprehend them as they know that the Pir is politically powerful. The situation is expressive of the unwritten pact between the rulers at Lahore and the violent extremists.

According to an eye-witness inside the Model Town mosque the terrorist who went to the first floor of the mosque was captured by four young Ahmadi men who were there for security duty. The terrorist, who was shooting worshippers on the ground floor, was pounced upon by Mr... who described it as, "I got up in a flash and rushed towards him. He was 24 feet away from me (I measured the distance later). I don't remember whether I ran, jumped, flew or I was propelled by the angels or thrown at him by God, as I have a very vague memory of my movement. But in the space of time, it takes one to press the trigger once, I was upon him. I grabbed and threw him to the ground." He held the attacker's rifle firmly which had become intensely hot due to excessive firing. This injured the Ahmadi's hand. The whole drama took nearly 40 minutes to end. The Elite Force entered the mosque when it was prudent and safe to do so.

The captured terrorist was injured during the action. He was delivered to the police, who took him to hospital. They handed him over to the hospital staff along with the other injured worshippers without informing them that he was the terrorist. It was many hours later that an injured Ahmadi noticed him and informed the doctors of his identity, only then was he isolated. The following night, his handlers attempted to rescue or kill him. They did not succeed, but in the process almost a dozen persons including some policemen were killed.

The daily Ausaf of June 6 reported that a constable helped a man to visit the injured terrorist at Jinnah Hospital. The cop discoursed with the latter for two hours. Ausaf also learnt that approximately 2 minutes before the attack on the hospital, an unknown person warned the ICU patients to leave as the police were about to intervene. Accordingly some patients left, while others stayed.

The daily Khabrain of Lahore published a report by its crime reporter on May 30, 2010 on the Lahore carnage: "The quick-response of the Elite Force could do nothing. In the past, the terrorists got the police embroiled, while they accomplished their mission. (This time also) the policemen celebrated their success, while the event displayed their failure."

According to a report on the Pakistani TV channel Geo News, security agencies have recovered large amount of weapons and ammunition in the Punjab (Ferozwala). The seized goods included two truck-loads of explosives, 300 grenades, 15 anti-aircraft guns, 10 drums of chemicals, 30 missiles, 15 mines, 16 walkie-talkie sets, 24 klashinkof automatic rifles and thousands of bullets. This depot was disclosed by the two terrorists, Imran and Bilal who were involved in the attacks on the Ahmadiyya mosques and the raid on Jinnah Hospital.

It was noted and mentioned by some commentators that Ahmadis did not take out a procession nor take to the streets to protest against the attacks. In a letter to an editor, a participant in the funeral of an Ahmadi youth wrote that he found no one beating his/her chest, crying loudly, or even audibly sobbing.

The principal of FMH College of Medicine and Dentistry, Lahore wrote to the father of Waleed, a student at his college: "We all were shocked to hear this tragic news and are appalled and heartbroken at the loss of your bright, charming and lovable son. There are no words to adequately express our heartfelt sorrow. The world has lost someone very special." It is worthy of mention that Waleed's paternal and maternal grand-fathers were both murdered by anti-Ahmadi assassins in mid 1980s in Sindh when General Zia promulgated the infamous Ordinance XX. Waleed was his parents' only son.

The nephew of Major General ® Nasir Ahmad Chaudhry, one of the martyrs, recalled that his uncle thought of himself as a Pakistani patriot. He fought for the nation in three wars and carried a shrapnel from one of them in his knee. *The New York Times - Report from Glen Ellyn ILL.*

Only a month later when terrorists attacked the visitors in the shrine of Data Ganj Bakhsh in Lahore, the Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court took *suo motu* notice, visited the Darbar and issued a call to the Capital City Police Officer to appear before the court, so as to ascertain whether the tragic incident took place due to a security lapse (*The Dawn; July 3, 2010*). No such initiative came forth after the twin attack on the Ahmadiyya places of worship, although the dead numbered twice the victims of the massacre in Data Darbar.

After the terrorist attack on Data Darbar, the Sharif brothers visited the shrine and the injured in the hospital. Prime Minister Gilani visited the Darbar and the hospital after the attack. They made no such visits to the Ahmadiyya sites of the Lahore carnage. This phenomenon was noticed by the judges of the Court of Inquiry in 1953 also, and they pointed out in their Report: "Further we feel that the Ahrar were treated as members of the family and the Ahmadis as strangers. ..." (p. 384) The national leadership has apparently moved around a peg in 57 years from Mile Zero to Mile Zero.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK, Mr Wajid Shamsul Hasan visited His Holiness, Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad at the Fazl Mosque in London on 2nd June 2010 to offer his condolences for the terrorist attacks. This meeting lasted 40 minutes. His Holiness commented that all the attacks taking place in Pakistan were a direct result of mixing religion with politics, according to a press release of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in London on 7 June 2010.

Mr. Rahman Malik was considerate enough to visit the injured in a hospital where he presented a bouquet to a lady related to a casualty. The lady refused the gift and reminded the minister that if adequate attention had been paid to the security of the worshipper(s) there would have been no occasion to pay this call.

PPP leaders in Lahore stated: "Recent events (at Lahore) are the works of Tehrik Taliban who are in collaboration with Lashkar Jhangvi, Jaish Muhammad and Sipah Sahabah." *The daily Aman; Faisalabad, June 5, 2010*

When one of the terrorists was about to be overpowered by an Ahmadi at the Garhi Shahu mosque, he shouted *Khatme Nabuwwat Zindah Bad* (Long live - end of prophethood) before blowing himself up.

There were credible intelligence reports that the parent terrorist organization had plans to carry out still more attacks on Ahmadi worshippers the following Friday. However, everyone was on high alert, and the terrorist leaders called off the strikes. Three suspects were held near the Ahmadiyya mosque in Garhi Shahu.

Instead, the terrorists decided to focus on an easier target – the Shezan factory in Lahore, which is owned by an Ahmadi. A major explosion resulted in damage to the property and injuries to five men. There was a gas pipeline close by; had it caught fire the damage would have been immense. Shezan is always mentioned in the hate pamphlets of Majlis Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwwat. A calendar published by this organization for the Year 2010 carries the following entries, *inter alia*:

The only cure for Qadianis: AL-JIHAD AL-JIHAD

O Muslim, do not give donations to Mirzais by drinking Shezan beverages.

The first sign of love of the Holy Prophet is the complete boycott of Mirzais.

(Note: The authorities took no action against the publishers of this calendar.)

Ahmadis in Rabwah know that they are targets of the terrorists. The authorities have advised them to be on guard. Rabwah, therefore, looks like a city under siege and ready to defend itself. However, it is worth noting that the situation has not cowed the citizens down, and the attendance in their mosques has gone up since the massacre in Lahore. Their morale is high. Some mullas protested through the press against the Ahmadis of Rabwah for measures taken by them for self-defence. The former said that these had caused inconvenience to the public.

A widow who lost her husband on 28 May massacre sent her 10-years old son to the same mosque in Lahore the next Friday for prayers, despite a serious warning of a repeat attack, and asked him to pray at the same spot as his father.

Noor Fatima, a 4-years old girl who was at the Garhi Shahu mosque on May 28th was injured on her left cheek, but she survived. In an interview with a video team she stated that bad people (*ganday log*)

threw broken glasses at her. She prayed that God would restore the fans and the carpet of the (Dar-uz-Zikr) mosque. When asked whether she would like to go to the mosque again, she gave a firm nod in the affirmative.

However, courage is not a trade-mark of any particular group. Mr. Banyan, a reporter of the UK weekly *The Economist*, also attended the prayers at the Ahmadiyya mosque in Garhi Shahu, Lahore, the following Friday.

Interestingly a video can be seen on YouTube of a mulla shouting a hate-speech against Ahmadis. One of his listeners is seen in the next clip present outside the Garhi Shahu mosque on May 28, 2010. He was suspected and arrested by the police on the spot. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhCm5-dsW3M>

The electronic media on 28th May and the print media the next day had a problem with religious terms. The reporters were reluctant to call the Ahmadiyya mosques, a ‘mosque’ so they invented new terms like *Jamaat Khana*, *Ibadat Ghah* etc. Although the Ahmadiyya Friday prayers are little different to Sunni or Shia prayers, they took care not to refer to them as *Salat-i-Juma* or *Namaz-i-Juma* but termed the prayers simply as *Ibadat* (worship). One senior reporter on TV invented the story that Ahmadis had gathered there at the occasion of the death anniversary of their founder. He ignored the fact that their founder did not die on May 28. It was also comical when a TV reporter referred to the Ahmadi martyrs as *halak* (perished), but for the dead terrorist, he used respectful term such as *Jan Bahaq* (one who delivers his soul to God).

A BBC reporter pointed out the following:

- TV channels were more obsessed with making sure that in their broadcasts Ahmadi mosques were called places of worship.
- When the funerals of the massacred Ahmadis took place there were no officials, no politicians present.
- “Two incidents in the past week made me realize how pathological our response was. At a vigil to mark the massacre where a handful of people had turned up, a passer-by asked me, ‘Are you an Ahmadi?’ My own loud and aggressive denial surprised me.”
- “Then an Ahmadi friend whose father survived the Lahore massacre wrote to me saying “You know we have been living like this for decades. (Did) something like this have to happen for you to speak up?”

An op-ed reported: “Only a few hours after the attack on Ahmadiyya places of worship, mobile phones were passing deplorable messages. Someone was suggesting that Ahmadis themselves had managed the attacks to get so-and-so religious organization banned. Someone was conveying greetings over the death of ‘infidels’ while another indicated that the attacks were at the initiative of the U.S. Some TV channels indulged in provocative statements while others preferred to maintain silence.”

Zubeida Hina in the Daily Express, June 2, 2010

Some people distributed sweets after receiving the news of the massacre. Others took out celebratory processions.

The Amir *Jamaat-i-Islami*, Munawwar Hasan warned that another major Khatme Nabuwwat movement could be launched on the same lines as in 1953.

In less than three weeks after the Lahore carnage, TV channel Express News invited three rabid mullas to their popular show Point Blank with Lucman, on June 16, 2010 and engaged in a most provocative live discussion for almost an hour. The mullas, led by the anchorperson Mr. Lucman Mubashir, stressed that Ahmadis were not simple infidels but are *Murtad* (apostates). In their understanding of *Shariah*, the penalty of apostasy is nothing short of death. The program was repeated twice the next day.

A few days earlier, on the same program, the anchorperson Lucman had invited an Ahmadi scholar and two non-Ahmadis subsequent to the attacks in Lahore. The Ahmadi guest managed to convey that Ahmadis had the same *Kalima* (Islamic creed) as the rest of the Muslims, and they also believe in the

Finality of Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. (with a very fine difference in point of detail *vis-a-vis* other Muslims).

This public statement infuriated the Mullas who keep telling their followers that Ahmadis are the worst infidels and apostates in the whole world. Reportedly mullas threatened Lucman, and he decided to appease them beyond reasonable bounds.

The European Parliament noted in Brussels what the provincial government could not in Lahore – the consequences of hateful religious conferences. In Para 11 of its Resolution of 20 May, 2010 (a week before the massacre) the Parliament expressed **“its particular concern at the ongoing discrimination against and persecution of Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan, and calls upon the Government of Pakistan to repeal section 298 (sic) of the Pakistan Penal Code which severely restricts the daily lives of the group, and to discourage inflammatory events such as the ‘End of Prophethood’ Conference in Lahore.”**

International Humanist and Ethical Union conveyed to the UN Human Rights Council the following, *inter alia*:

“Need we remind the Council and the government of Pakistan that it was government and media support for expressions of hatred that led to the Nazi Holocaust and the genocide in Rwanda?”

The US Commission of International Religious Freedom pointed out that “the Taliban-associated extremists find cover in the anti-Ahmadi laws in the Constitution, Pakistan’s egregious blasphemy law and the government’s unwillingness to protect the religious freedoms of the community.”

The Ahmadiyya community continued to receive messages of sympathy. Ms Maria Otero, US Under Secretary of State who was on a visit to Pakistan met Ahmadi elders and conveyed message of condolences and sympathy from Secretary Clinton.

Hon. Joelle Milquet, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium visited the Ahmadiyya centre in Brussels to offer condolences and sympathy over the Lahore carnage. She was accompanied by Ms. Razzouk Souad MP.

The Foreign Minister of Sweden, in answer to a question in the parliament stated that the EU, of which Sweden is a member, “acted very fast against the lethal attacks on Ahmadi mosques through a statement by the highest representative for foreign issues Catherine Ashton on the 28 May. The EU also discussed the tragic event in its speech at the Human Rights Council’s session in June where it was made clear that the obligation of the state to prevent and punish violence against minorities as well as the freedom of religion and opinion of all citizens must be guaranteed.” *Svar pa skriftlig fragar 2009/10:883 den 16 juni*

The US Ambassador to Pakistan Anne Patterson pointed out in a statement that provocative statements promote intolerance and incite extremist violence.

Mian Nawaz Sharif deserves a mention here because of a statement made by him and the fallout from it. On a visit to the residence of a victim of the Lahore carnage he told the press that Ahmadis were an asset to the country and should be considered as brothers. This simple political statement aroused the mulla, and Mr. Sharif was forced to weather the storm of the clerics’ anger.

The 28th May attacks generated a giant wave of public sympathy. However, the political elites, who pay a great deal of lip service to the rights of marginalized communities, did not take advantage of the situation to provide some relief to Ahmadis. They could have easily returned nationalized Ahmadiyya schools and colleges back to Ahmadi ownership, in accordance with the government’s own 15-year old policy. They could have changed the name of Chenab Nagar back to Rabwah. They could have implemented Joint Electorate, without discrimination against Ahmadis, etc. But the leaders perhaps believe that ‘the better part of valor is discretion’.

The events of 28th May provide a rich ground for those with esoteric taste. There are reliable and traceable reports that a large number of the victims or their close relatives had prior dreams with clear indication of what was likely to happen, and they had conveyed those to their near and dear ones. Anyone who is interested in research in the field of (pious) dreams and their interpretation can avail this, of which one reads only in books and scriptures.

Khalifa-tul-Masih V, the Supreme Head of the Community mentioned each and every one of the martyrs and described their fair attributes in his Friday sermons. He also briefly mentioned some of the dreams and visions referred to in the Para above.

The Supreme Head of the Ahmadiyya community spoke on the developments in Pakistan and the Lahore attacks in his closing address at the annual Ahmadiyya conference in Germany on June 27, 2010. He told Ahmadis to disregard the foul language of the Pakistani mulla and turn to prayers, *Istighfar* and a closer relationship with God.

The international and domestic media, including the vernacular, tackled the issue of sectarianism and extremism. Column-writers and intellectuals talked of ‘culture of impunity’, ‘pampered extremism’, obscurantists and apologists, the evil of present day edicts like *Wajib ul Qatl*, ‘Pakistan’s pariah status’ etc. A reader in a ‘letter to the editor’ wrote that the attacks rendered him speechless. The Friday Times of Lahore wrote an op-ed in the June 4 issue under the title: **A weak state without conscience**. Below are excerpts from some of the writers who wrote in the aftermath of the attack; these are:

The Lahore carnage. It is an open secret that parts of the province, particularly its southern regions, have become the hotbed of rabid religiosity and the lair of blood-thirsty fanatics who have been found never shy or inhibited in brandishing their extremism violently and bloodily. Even this Lahore massacre is in all probability the thuggish evil job of confessional outfit of these murderous brigands. *The Frontier Post, May 30, 2010*

Pity the nation. It’s awful, chilling and frightening. ... Meanwhile the law looks the other way. In fact, sometimes it colludes as in the case of two banners that were up in Lahore. One was recently on Mall Road outside the Lahore High Court and translated read: “Jews, Christians, Ahmadis are enemies of Islam.” The other was a billboard put up last year, reportedly, for the Aalmi Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-i-Nabuwat. Translated, a section of it reads: “Friendship with Ahmadis is rebellion against the Prophet (may peace be upon him)”. City authorities did not remove this venom for fear of provoking a reaction by extreme right. *The Dawn; June 7, 2010*

Culture of impunity. Noted writer and columnist Shahrier Kabir (of Bangla Desh) said, “the international human rights organizations should raise their voice to ensure the right to freedom of religion” (in Pakistan). He also called for “putting an end to the culture of impunity to prevent such attacks” (as on Ahmadis at Lahore). If we cannot get rid of the culture of impunity, it would not be possible to ensure security of lives. *The Daily Star, Dhaka; June 6, 2010*

Human rights and Pakistan. After signing this covenant (CCPR 1966) can Pakistan really justify the treatment it has meted out to the Ahmadis and its handling of minorities who live in a perpetual state of insecurity? Does it truly plan to fulfill its obligations? *Zubeida Mustafa in the Dawn of June 9, 2010*

Arab states. What the oil-rich Arab states should have done is to establish high class universities in Pakistan if not in their own countries, but they wasted billions on building mosques, setting up seminaries and (supporting) jihadists. This harvest is being reaped by our entire society in the form of terrorism. *Shoa’b Aadil in the Aajkal on June 12, 2010*

At the heart. This past week, though, I am silent, the massacre of 94 members of the minority Ahmadi community on May 28 has exposed something ugly at the heart of Pakistan in its laws, its rulers, its society. *Declan Wash in the guardian.co.uk on 7 June 2010*

Attacks and beyond. What helps sustain terrorist groups is the political profile of Punjab that is marked by religious conservatism and a strong right-wing orientation. The PML-N that rules the Punjab avoids a categorical criticism of militancy, hoping to protect its right-wing/Islamist electoral support. *Dr Hasan Askari Rizvi in The Friday Times of June, 2010*

The Second Amendment. The Second Amendment (Ahmadi-specific) laid the foundation of intolerance and religious tyranny in Pakistan, which has manifested itself in many ways. Since then our state has been in a downward spiral. *Yassir Latif Hamdani in the Daily Times; May 31, 2010*

Last, but not least, people are again talking about the importance of the power struggle between the provincial government and central government and the effect it had on agitation against Ahmadis in 1953. May be this is a very appropriate occasion, almost 60 years after the riots in the Punjab, to hold

another high-level judicial inquiry, as the one held under the Court of Inquiry constituted under Punjab Act II of 1954.

Update on Lahore two months later

Important information obtained from different sources is listed below, after two months of the attack on Lahore mosques:

1. The two terrorists captured by Ahmadis and delivered to the police, disclosed very important information to the security and intelligence agencies, which led to scores of arrests.
2. Mullas of the Khatme Nabuwat faction, Ahrar-i-Islam and other groups reacted aggressively to the wave of general sympathy for Ahmadis, and heightened their anti-Ahmadiyya hostility.
3. The Jamaat-i-Islami threatened anti-Ahmadiyya agitations similar to those of 1953.
4. A doctor (working in a state hospital) who is a former Nazim of Islami Jamiat Talaba, was detained by security agencies. He admitted playing a role in the Lahore attacks.
5. Ahmadi leaders of foreign branches of Jamaat UK, Canada, Norway, Germany, Netherlands and Sweden etc visited Lahore to offer their condolences to the bereaved families and to express solidarity with the Pakistani community.
6. According to a press release from London, Hadrat Khalifa-tul-Masih V (May God be his helper) said in an address in the UK Annual Ahmadiyya Conference, *“Those who persecute us had hoped and expected that after the Lahore attacks we would become scared and fearful. But in the wake of that tragedy our true spirit has emerged, that we are not scared of anyone or anything except God Almighty.”*
7. Pakistan is in the grip of successive crises like devastating floods, a major air disaster, terrorist attack on Data Darbar, sectarian murders, WikiLeaks, spate of target-killings, political instability etc. It is extraordinary coincidence that the first rain causing the deluge poured on 28th July, 2010, two months after the massacre – exact to the date.

Terminal questions

An incident of this nature and magnitude demands that appropriate inquiry be made at appropriate forum and valid conclusions be derived to assign responsibilities and help avoid recurrence. The contents of this story given in his report are inadequate for this purpose; however, these do help pose a few important and legitimate questions to help solve this riddle. These are listed below:

1. The authorities in Lahore had been informed by the federal government, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the Ahmadiyya community that the community was under threat of attack. Why did they fail to attend to these warnings, and took no special measures to beef up the security in the two mosques?
2. Why did the administration and the police insist that Ahmadi guards on security duty at the mosques should not carry arms, while all over the province, the authorities recommend and require mosque administrations to arrange armed guards?
3. Once the terrorist attack had begun why there was no adequate and effective police response to the terrorist action despite the availability at hand of the elite force and the special police force (QRF)? At the Lahore garrison there are plenty of army troops and rangers, always at hand to assist the civil authorities; their assistance was not requested - why? The available APC at the scene was used ineffectively. The police moved in when the terrorists achieved their object. At whose direction the intervention was delayed?
4. Who ordered and why that Ahmadis wounded, who still needed competent medical care, be discharged forthwith from the state-owned hospital?
5. No compensation or financial relief has been provided by the government to the wounded or the families of the Ahmadis killed in the attacks, as is the routine at such occasions. Why this deliberate discrimination?

6. A high level Inquiry Committee was formed by the Punjab government to look into the tragic incident. What happened to it and where are its proceedings and findings? The Committee has not asked for the Ahmadiyya community's views or comments.
7. The provincial chief minister decided not to make a sympathy visit to the Ahmadiyya community, nor had a look at the sites, nor went to the hospital to enquire after the wounded. What kept him from these minimal official, political and social norms?

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