Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan
News Report  October 2017

October 2017 – a grueling month for Ahmadis in Pakistan
Ahmadis granted their right to vote; but finally deprived of this fundamental right again

Life for Ahmadis is made demanding and taxing generally all the year round in Pakistan, but there are occasions when Ahmadis are spotlighted with hateful and sinister propaganda, and they do not know which way the events would turn and what could happen by the next week. This October was one such occasion.

A revised Election Bill was under preparation by a parliamentary committee since July 2014. A 16-members sub-committee under chairmanship of Mr. Zahid Hamid, the federal law minister had asked for proposals for the new bill. Ahmadis, like numerous other bodies and individuals, met the Chief Election Commissioner and made suitable recommendations. The sub-committee comprised members from various political parties. A wholesome bill was passed on August 22, 2017 by the National Assembly and the same was cleared by the Senate on September 22; however, it was proposed therein that a person declared disqualified or punished for a crime could become the president of his political party. The amended bill was presented again in the National Assembly on October 2, where it was passed after some hot discussion. The President signed the bill the same evening, and it became law.

The final Elections Act 2017, for the purpose of this story, carried three provisions, *inter alia*:

1. It permitted a legally disqualified person to become president of his party. (Ahmadis had nothing to do with this clause/change.)
2. A candidate filing papers for nomination to contest general elections was now required to ‘declare’ his faith in End of Prophethood rather than ‘solemnly swear’ the same. (Ahmadis had neither asked for this change, nor were they informed about it in advance. The text of the affidavit remained unchanged.)
3. From now onward voting lists were to be prepared from NADRA records for persons over the age of 18. Rules 7B and 7C promulgated by General Musharraf’s executive order whereby separate voting lists for Ahmadis, and End of Prophethood certificate and denial of Ahmadiyyat were required from every voter who claimed to be Muslim, were done away with. (Thus Ahmadis could now form a part of the ‘joint electorate’, and be able to vote.)

Ahmadis were happy to join the political mainstream of the nation, even if partly. This was a major change. It lasted 5 days.

Whatever happened on October 2 and in the rest of that month deserves a mention, some analysis and a place on record. These events expose the insidious, wily and dangerous nature of politics and media in Pakistan.

The newly passed Act contained two important changes. The first one was the provision that a disqualified person (read NS, Mr. Nawaz Sharif) could become the president of his political party. This was sought and achieved by the treasury benches. The opposition was furious over this, and would like to have it undone.

The second big change was the fact that from now onward Ahmadis would be able to vote for a candidate. This was totally unacceptable to the mulla. The religious parties would
fight tooth and nail to deny this right to Ahmadis. Some members of the opposition and others of the ruling party cared little for the Ahmadis’ right of vote. However, most of these found it difficult to take the immoral, indeed unspeakable stand, of denying in public voting right to the Ahmadiyya community. So, they found a way out of this – they picked up the issue of ‘end of prophethood’, and they spotlighted the change of the wording from ‘solemnly swear’ to ‘declare’ – a petty and unimportant change (even from Islamic point of view), indeed a non-issue.

It is relevant to mention that for months, before the bill was passed by the Senate it was discussed, clause by clause, in the sub-committee, and nobody had objected to the issue of ‘declaration’ of Khatme Nabuwwat nor that of the elimination of Rules 7B and 7C. This came up only during the final reading of the bill in the Senate on September 22, when the issue of permitting disqualified persons to assume the chairmanship of their party came up.

The treasury benches managed to get the amended Bill, containing the permissive clause about chairmanship by disqualified persons, passed in the Senate. It was taken to the National Assembly where the opposition, some mullas, Sheikh Rashid etc. shouted hoarse over the non-issue of the ‘declaration’ concerning ‘end of prophethood’ to stop the passage of the bill. But the ruling party, with help of numbers, had the bill passed and enacted.

Mian Nawaz Sharif (NS) was elected (or nominated) chief of his party within a day or two. But the genie of the end of prophethood had been let loose and it refused to go back in the bottle.

Islamist political parties, the rabidly anti-NS political opposition and the mullas of all hues raised hell over the change of wording from ‘I solemnly swear’ to ‘I declare’ for the election candidates. Most of them took the false position that the wording of the text of the affidavit had been changed. Some conveyed as if the Ahmadis have again been admitted in Islam, and the constitutional amendment had been made void. It was a propaganda blitz, apparently against the ruling party, but effectively against the Ahmadis. Within two days, important persons of the PML-N including Mr. Nawaz Sharif conceded to the protest and promised to restore the two words of the affidavit.

We reproduce below only a few of the statements as sample to show the nature of this propaganda Tsunami:

- Khatme Nabuwwat (KN: End of Prophethood) was a noose around Ahmadis’ throat; it has been removed: Zulfiqar Butt (of Minhaj ul Quran party).
- The government should come to its senses; first they invited Allah’s wrath by hanging Ghazi Mumtaz Qadri Shaheed – now again it has incited Allah’s punishment: Mubashir Qadri (C.E. Khatme Nabuwwat Forum)
- Countrywide protest movement against the disputed Election bill. Daily Ummat October 3
- We’ll die for KN; withdraw (the change) before Friday – you, who only act to please the West; those who are ready to die for the Prophet, rise: we shall make life unbearable for those who take KN lightly; the nation should get ready (to rise); This notice expires on Friday: Sheikh Rashid Ahmad (of Awami Muslim League)
- This is the darkest amendment; it is a major attack on our faith; (Mulla) Ashraf Jalali (of Labaik Ya Rasul ullah)
- Change in the KN law is intolerable: Ch. Shujaat (of PML-Q)
- Milli Yakjehhti Council calls an All Party Conference in Lahore for October 5.
- Those responsible for change in Declaration should be duly punished: (Mulla) Raghib Naemi
- God’s wrath has been sought through change in KN constitutional amendment: Rana Aslam
• No fraudulent group will be allowed to tinker with delicate legislation: Tahir ul Qadri (PAT)
• The PML-N government has unshakable faith in KN: Shahbaz Sharif
• I have always taken active part in upholding KN laws: Punjab CM
• We’ll not even think of doing away with KN declaration: Zahid Hamid (Federal Minister of Law)
• Change in KN declaration: Nawaz Sharif orders restoration.

Nawaz Sharif, former PM ordered restoration of the KN declaration on October 3, less than two days after the President put his signatures on the passed Act.

The changes were approved by the National Assembly, and later by the Senate on October 10.

Hardly anybody mentioned that not only the two words of ‘solemnly swear’ had been restored, but the right of Ahmadis to be part of the ‘Joint Electorate’ had been forfeited – which was the main but undeclared aim of the agitation.

It seems that as a part of the corrupt bargain, the treasury benches agreed to the restoration of the KN clauses, while the opposition agreed to let the provision regarding ‘disqualified’ persons remain intact. Both sides felt victorious – only the Ahmadis were worsened, as always.

The KN pot, that was taken to the boiling point, kept on boiling even after NS had ordered compliance with the demand of the bigots. The hype generated by this issue in print and electronic media did further damage to the public perception of the Ahmadiyya community. Ahmadis were given no space in the print media and no time on TV channels to air their views. But more on this later.

In response to the bursting of the protest, the Speaker of the Assembly issued a statement that change of the two words was only a clerical error and would be soon rectified. The opposition, however, discarded this explanation. Mian Nawaz Sharif promised to take action against him who was responsible for the error; he even appointed a high-level committee of PML-N stalwarts to investigate and assign responsibility. Nevertheless, anti-PML-N open-air meetings and rallies continued. All Parties Conferences were scheduled by even second grade groups; protests were programmed, well into November.

The PML-N high command apparently took note that their opposition were cashing on the KN and ‘Qadiani’ issues, so why not turn the tables and take the lead on this issue. They decided to launch their own unguided missile, Capt ® M. Safdar, the son-in-law of the former PM.

Capt (R) Safdar, an MNA of PML-N was in London when Mr. Nawaz Sharif landed there on October 5, 2017. Safdar flew back home three days later, arriving Pakistan at 1:20 a.m. on October 9, 2017. Upon landing he was arrested by NAB officials on charges of corruption. He soon got release on bail from the accountability court, went to the National Assembly and launched a vociferous attack against the Ahmadi community on a point of order, describing them a ‘threat to the country’ and demanding that its members be banned from induction into the government and military service.

He also called for Nobel Laureate Dr Abdul Salam’s name to be delinked from the Quid-i-Azam University’s physics department, which has recently been renamed by his own father-in-law, in honour of the celebrated Pakistani Ahmadi scientist.

The prestigious daily Dawn commented on Safdar’s tirade, in its issue of 12 October:

“It was a diatribe both repugnant, not only in what was said but also in terms of the wider ramifications.

“Not only that, Capt Safdar’s tirade – one that any violent extremist would be proud of – clearly violates the country’s hate speech laws as well as the objectives of the National Action Plan. The
concept of inclusivity that our leadership is supposedly promoting as an antidote to intolerance in society books no exceptions.

“However, when the floor of the assembly was being used to spew invective against a minority community, the people’s representatives could only watch in craven silence, sometimes even thumping their desks in approval. Despite their lofty claims of countering religious extremism in all its forms, not one legislator had the spine or decency to object....”

It should be placed on record that when Safdar was haranguing the Assembly with hate speech, the presiding speaker (Mr. Murtaza J Abbasi) did not censure him nor even interrupted him.

In his speech Safdar accused the Ahmadis, “In their false religion, Jihad has no place.”

On leaving the assembly hall, Safdar, in company of his minions, shouted slogans: Jo Qadianon ka yar hai - Mulk ka ghaddar hai (One who befriends Ahmadis, is a traitor to the country). He even raised shouts in support of Mumtaz Qadri, the murderer of Governor Taseer. All this betrayed the political motivation of his anti-Ahmadi outburst. He aimed at weaning back the general Brelvi votes which had been noticed in the by-election of NA-120 to have gone away. Also, he paid a visit to the shrine of Pir Golara Sharif two days later.

Capt Safdar’s performance was so grotesque and depraved that it met wide-spread condemnation. The opposition, of course, would not pat him on the back. The English press and intellectuals condemned him openly. His performance and the civil society response to it was of character that even the PML-N did not support him outside the assembly.

Y.L. Hamadani, a leading Pakistani intellectual tweeted on 17 October: “The world community must be shocking pot when the son in law of the most powerful politician in Pakistan is calling for genocide.”

Kashif Butt wrote an op-ed in the vernacular daily, Jinnah, on October 18, 2017 and titled it: Capt. Safdar’s spew (Qai). He wrote: "Although no one can claim to be a patriot or a great believer by targeting another religion or belief, but very often this is done to win the sympathy of common people. Perhaps this was the essential intent of Captain Safdar’s long speech in the Assembly. It would therefore be appropriate to term his speech a spew....It is essential to soberly review his words, if all this is a part of government's back-door policy!"

A question was raised even in the British Parliament on Captain Safdar’s speech in the national assembly.

All this soon convinced the PML-N leadership that their missile had malfunctioned and was headed towards the launching site. The leadership hurried to distance itself from his outpouring. NS stated that the speech was Safdar’s own and not a policy of the party.

Whatever the political outcome of the Safdar’s outburst, Ahmadis were left with feeling of having been bruised further.

Sunni Tehrik and Tehrik Labbaik Ya Rasul–ullah (TLY). These politico-religious parties comprise primarily of Brelvi members. The former became active many years ago while the latter is a more recent growth. Sunni Tehrik came into being as a reaction to the great political influence gained by the minority Deobandi and Salafi groups in Pakistan. The Tehrik decided to use the religion weapon to share political influence. Anti-Ahmadi posture, the issue of Honour of the Prophet, and the KN controversy were adopted apparently as the main concerns. Maulana Sarwat Qadri is their leader. The Labbaik people have decided that emphasizing the Ahmadiyya issue and the KN controversy is a short cut to gain common man’s sympathy and vote, so in the past few months they have attempted to outdo others in holding anti-Ahmadi rallies and conferences. Mulas Ashraf Asif Jalali, Khadim Hussain Rizvi and Pir Afzal Qadri are the leading figures of this group. They co-operate and liaise with the Sunni Tehrik.
The Labbaik group assessed the KN ‘declaration’ issue as one whereby they could claim more than their own share. They not only participated in the on-going agitation, they declared to undertake a long march from Lahore to the federal capital on 6th November. This was a major undertaking to cause concern to the administration – and to Ahmadis, of course.

The Sunni Tehrik was not to be left behind; they took out a rally at short notice and headed for Islamabad on October 25. Senior leaders of the Labbaik also accompanied them. The administration had to take immediate steps to block the protesters’ entry to Islamabad. This caused great inconvenience to the inter-city/province traffic and to the twin-city local commuters, because of road blocks and traffic jams. The administration had to act tough with unwelcome visitors and arrested a large number of them.

As reaction to the above, the party stalwarts assembled a crowd in Lahore and disturbed motorway traffic entering and leaving the provincial capital. They demanded that their fellows detained in Rawalpindi/Islamabad should be released. Events are taking unexpected turns and a sort of chaos prevails – at least at some focal points. The politics pursued by various groups and leagues have given birth to deformed babies that were not foreseen. Ahmadis pray, and wait and see.

A press report discloses the nature of this campaign. While addressing the sit-in crowd in China Chowk in Islamabad mulla Ashraf Jalali of TLY warned the rulers: “Pakistan came into being in the name of religion. America should remember that Pakistan is not its colony at all.”

The daily Ausaf, October 28, 2017

Print media. Vernacular print media mostly behaved very badly in support of the anti-Ahmadi campaign this month, as always. Approximately 1000 news items etc were published. A number of big names wrote columns to explain why the wording ‘I swear solemnly’ instead of ‘I declare’ are absolutely vital for the health of Islam and Pakistan. The press offered them plenty of space for this non-issue. Most of these bigots did not have the courage or honesty to even hint that their real aim was to deny Ahmadis their right of vote.

What the print media found too monstrous to print free, it did on payment, as an ad. Haji Sheikh Afzal of Ultai Tank Group who claims to be a former Trade President of PPP (sic) had it advertised in the daily Aman on October 7, 2017 in a 23 cm x 18.5 cm ad that (extract): “Even death is welcome in bondage to the Prophet... All parliamentarians including the Speaker who supported or signed the (Election) Bill are Wajib ul Qatl (must be put to death). Those who will hang Zahid Hamid, the Law Minister and his colleagues will be crowned in gold. Those who tinker with Shaheed Bhutto’s constitution have no right to live.” (See the ad in Annex II) This ad was available to public in addition to the thousands of subscribers of the Aman. No action is known to have been taken against the newspaper nor the advertiser. Apparently, it is not Ahmadis alone who are Wajib ul Qatl, the ruling elite also deserve to be put to death. The consequences of laissez faire attitude to religious bigots have come home to roost.

Some of those who joined this foray on the side of injustice and denial of basic rights to Ahmadis were: Aamar Liaquat Husain, Orya Maqbhool Jan, Dr Shahid Masood, Justice (R) Nazir A Ghazi, Yusuf Siraj, Dr Umar Farooq, Khadim Hussain Rizvi, Major Zaheer Mohiyuddin, Abdul Wadood Qureshi, Asif Mahmood, Ausaf Sheikh, etc. They vilified Ahmadis profusely.

One of the few persons who wrote a sensible article for the right-wing daily Nawa-i-Waqt was Mr. Nusrat Javeed. He gave it the title: Trouble-mongering can destroy everything.

English press came out boldly in support of fairplay and nation-building. It addressed the controversy not only through op-eds but wrote editorials on various happenings precipitated in the name of KN. The Urdu press disregarded Capt Safdar’s outrage, but few had the intellectual honesty to condemn him.
**Electronic media.** TV channels availed the occasion to play up the controversy. Those who normally do not vilify Ahmadis, but are committed to anti-PML-N policy, spoke against the revision of the past electoral rules and supported the status-quo that deprives Ahmadis their right of vote. In this, Sabir Shakir, Sami Ibrahim and Arif Bhatti of ARY, who never tire of counting the moral failings of the ruling group, betrayed their own moral and social shallowness. The official channel PTV shared the shame of broadcasting the entire highly objectionable speech of Captain Safdar in the assembly, knowing that it was violation of the official National Action Plan. Mubashir Luqman also joined this lot of self-serving TV hosts.

A TV channel 92 News outdid others in anti-Ahmadi propaganda. Weeks later, on 30th October 2017, this channel invited a few rabid mullas to a talk-show on the subject of KN. The management did not have the courage or decency to invite an Ahmadi on the show, although this would have been welcomed by most of its viewers who would have found the Ahmadiyya view very informative and even interesting. Those invited were: Mulas Allah Wasaya, Ibtisam Ilahi Zaheer, Hussain Akbar and Irshad Arif. They talked of controversial and sub judice matters. Of course, only one-sided narrative was provided to the viewers. Whither restrictions on sectarianism, extremism – and terrorism!

**Social media.** Social media provided a convenient outlet for healthy discussion and exchange of views. A much more balanced and fairer picture emerged from the inputs to this media. One Farnood Alam wrote an excellent article in Urdu on website Humsub.com.pk. An extract from this is produced below under sub-heading: The Government.

**Politics.** Pakistan politics were exposed fully in broad daylight in these weeks. The fact that it lacks any principles came out repeatedly. None, not one party nor any leader came out clean or with a bold scheme in the interest of the country.

The person who behaved worst was Sheikh Rashid Ahmad of Rawalpindi, chief of his petty Awami Muslim League, a colleague of Imran’s PTI and a sworn opponent of the PML-N’s Mian brothers. He vigorously castigates his political rivals on moral grounds. However on the KN issue, he falsely took the position that the PML-N revision had done away with Khatme Nabuwwat. In the Assembly, he called for the (spirit of) Ahrar and even Ataulla Shah Bokhari. The Ahrars were those who were plainly condemned by a high-level judicial inquiry in 1953 for Punjab riots, in words: “The conduct of the Ahrar calls for the strongest comment and is especially reprehensible. We can use no milder word for the reason that they debased a religious issue by pressing it into service for a temporal purpose and exploited religious susceptibilities and sentiments of the people for their personal ends.” Sh Rashid did exactly the same – 64 years later.

- The Jamaat Islami threatened to ‘go to the courts and to the people’ over the revision of the Election rules.
- The Sunni Ittehad Council called the reforms ‘a robbery against KN.
- Ilyas Chinioti of PML-N stated that if Rana Sanaullah considers Ahmadis to be Muslims, he should be fired from ministership.
- Milli Yakjehti Council (of JUP) called for an All Parties Conference on 5 October, at 10 a.m.
- We, of JUI forced the government to withdraw the amendment: Maulana Abdul Ghafur Haideri
- It is unpardonable offense to remove the clause on KN: Saeed Ahmad Bhalli of PTI
- Restore the (KN) law, otherwise face country-wide protests: (Mulla) Tahir Mahmud Ashrafi of Pak Ulama Council
According to Zahidur Rashidi, a leading mulla, following upheld the flag high of KN in the Parliament on this occasion:

Raja Zafarul Haq (PML-N), Maulana Fazlur Rahman (JUI), Capt ® Safdar (PML-N), Sh Rashid Ahmad (AML), Shah Mahmud Qureshi (PTI), Mir Zafrullah Jamali (PML-N), Ch. Pervaiz Ilahi (PML-Q), Senator Sirajul Haq (JI), Senator Hafiz Hamadullah (JUI), etc.

When the government was harassed greatly over the words ‘I declare’, Rana Sanaullah, Law Minister in the Punjab decided to speak some truth in a TV interview. He said, “(Some of) Our Ulema do not consider them (Ahmadis) non-Muslims. If you go in some detail, they believe and practice the same as our beliefs, our prayers, fasting; they practice all this. They build mosques and make the (same) call to prayers....”

This stark truth was unacceptable to all those bigots who live in the lime light of media. It unleashed a storm against the Rana. Some included him in the list of kafirs over his statement. Others demanded his removal. All he was guilty of, was speaking some truth.

Eventually the Rana decided to back-track. He said that he was misunderstood. He even said, “Ahmadis, more than any other non-Muslim minority, are more dangerous to the Islamic faith.” Rana Sanaullah escaped the net by the above statement, but Ahmadis felt greatly wronged by his indiscreet assessment.

Raja Zafarul Haq, another PML-N leader declared to the press, “We shall soon disclose those who were responsible for conspiracy to make the disputed change.”

Noting all this, Mr. Kashif N. Chaudhri a Pak-American focused on the pseudo-liberal Imran Khan, and tweeted: “Khan and Kyi share a lot in common. They both lack any principle. They CANNOT risk the wrath of the majority Sunnis/Buddhists of their respective countries by speaking for a persecuted Muslim minority.”

That sums up well the Pakistani (and Burmese) politics.

The Government. The leading figures among rulers said little but were the main actors behind the stage of this ghastly drama. They could not help saying something about KN after all.

Ahsan Iqbal, the federal Interior Minister said, “It is kufr to make any compromise over Khatme Nabuwwat. We did not even think of making any changes to the law on Khatme Nabuwwat.”

Mr. Shahbaz Sharif insisted: “We have unshakable faith in Khatme Nabuwwat. I’ve always taken active steps to protect the laws on KN”. He also claimed: “For four years, we became dirt in dirt, to serve the people.”

The federal government considered and implemented a decision to even advertize in the press its faith and commitment to KN. A fair amount of money was thus spent to publish quarter-page colour ads in newspapers, asserting: “Democratic government is determined that this fundamental belief of Muslims will never come to any harm. End of prophethood is a part of our faith, as such, people are warned against those who raise this issue for political gains and to incite the sentiments of people. Defeat their condemnable designs.”

“Also, this is the call of the honour of the Prophet.”

Seal. Interior Ministry, Govt of Pakistan

Farnood Alam, an intellectual of great merit analysed these events of the month from a political and social viewpoint and concluded, (extract translated):

“In fact, Ahmadis have always been used for two purposes; either they are used as shells to bombard the opponents, or they are used as shields to protect oneself from the attacks of the rivals. If you want to kill anyone, there is no better than an Ahmadi-brand bullet, and if you want to protect yourself, there is no better armour than the Ahmadi brand. If our pals insist on calling this Islam, no wretched fellow can object to it.”
To this menacing anti-Ahmadi situation, Ahmadis, response was as declared by their Khalifa tul Masih V in his Friday sermon on October 6, 2017 (translated extract):

“It is the duty of every Ahmadi, every Pakistani Ahmadi that he should continue to pray for Pakistan, the country for which Ahmadis also made great sacrifices and continue to make sacrifices, that Allah protect it and save it from (the ravages of) tyrants and oppressive rulers and self-serving ulama, so that it also joins the ranks of free and respected countries of the world.”

Conclusion

Some people insist that all that happened in the month of October was as planned by the rulers. Others say that events unfolded as reported in the media. The truth lies somewhere in between, and only the leading political actors know the hidden facts. Surely there was a plan, and the main outcomes were brought about by this plan and subsequent decisions. However, events, along the way, took unexpected turns and difficulties arose beyond those expected by the decision makers. Finally all fell into place.

PML-N got its disqualified PM as President of the party, the opposition succeeded in lashing the rulers severely – and the Ahmadis, in the melee, again were denied their fundamental right to be part of mainstream politics.

During these four weeks Ahmadis felt as if they are a football that is kicked all around by two teams repeatedly and vigorously. The game has not ended yet; Ahmad Jamal Nizami, an op-ed writer for the popular right-wing daily Nawa-i-Waqt Lahore wrote on October 20, 2017: “There are no two views on this that if the government indulges into any more follies in actions against the doctrine of Khatme Nabuwwat, the third major movement can be triggered in the country for safeguarding the KN and the Honour of the Prophet.” (Nizami hinted thereby at the previous two blood-soaked anti-Ahmadi agitations of 1953 and 1974).

The daily Abtak in an op-ed on October 9, 2017 supported and echoed the same hypothesis as put forward by us in this story, (translated): “In conclusion, the amendment to the KN clause was only an excuse, the real story (and aim) was quite different. The rulers accomplished what they aimed at, and people simply watched. This was achieved through the trade-off among almost all political parties, as every political party is embroiled in some sort of corruption. May Allah have pity on our people. Amen.”

The National Action Plan is directly relevant to the events of this month for their sectarian and extremist nature. Mr. Altaf Qamar, a retired senior police officer read an illuminating paper in a seminar on the issue of: Extremist trends in Pakistan and their Solution. He quoted facts and figures, and concluded (translation):

“Under this program (NAP) it was intended to effectively defang and neutralize all motivation, expressions and proponents of religious and sectarian extremism. This was a very accurate diagnosis and excellent treatment of the disease. However, it is a pity that the federal and provincial governments did not implement it in reality. As a result, the expected results did not come forth. Even now, if this plan is implemented in its true sense and spirit, there is no reason why extremism will not be tamed in Pakistan.” The daily Pakistan, October 10, 2017

Three Ahmadis, innocent of any blasphemy, sentenced to death

Bhoiwal, District Sheikhpura; October 11, 2017: Three Ahmadis, Mr. Mubashir Ahmad, Mr. Ghulam Ahmad and Mr. Ihsan Ahmad of Bhoiwal were sentenced to death by a judge Muhammad Akram in Ferozwala.

Four Ahmadis, three mentioned above and Mr. Khalil Ahmad were charged under PPC 295-A, 337/2 and 427 allegedly for tearing an anti-Ahmadiyya sticker/pamphlet on May 12, 2014. Mr. Khalil Ahmad was killed two days later while in police custody. A year later, at the request of the opponent party a high court judge added deadly clause PPC 295-C to the charge-sheet on March 9, 2015. Their pleas for release on bail were rejected at all levels,
even by the Supreme Court. Now they have been sentenced to death after remaining behind bars for three and half years.

At this occasion the Asian Human Rights Commission issued an excellent ‘Statement’ AHRC-STM-136-2017, titled – **Pakistan: Court sentences Ahmadis to death.** It summarizes adroitly the overall situation of Ahmadis in the country. Only two entries therein need to be restated by us:

1. For “Many Ahmadis accused of blasphemy have been killed in jail by police officers. Not a single person responsible was ever caught or punished,” may be read as, “Ahmadi accused have been killed while in police custody. Not even five percent of the criminals who murdered Ahmadis have been arrested or prosecuted.”

2. For, “Thousands of Ahmadis have been jailed for the ‘crimes’ of praying, ... read, “Thousands of Ahmadis have been prosecuted for the ‘crimes’ of praying ...”.

The AHRC Statement is added as Annex I to this report.

**Callous police case against 20 Ahmadis**

*Lathiawala, District Faisalabad; October 6, 2017:* Opponents of the Ahmadiyya community attempted to capture local Ahmadiyya cemetery land. Ahmadis opposed this attempt and called the emergency police at 15. The police came and imposed peace. The SHO called both the parties to the police station on October 11, 2017. He heard both the parties and arrested 20 men from each side under PPC 407/451. This was justice a’la Punjab Police. Following Ahmadis were arrested:

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This case has a history. In 2010, a man, Muhammad Akram was killed in this area. The opponents of the Ahmadiyya community got agitated over it and demolished the outer wall of the Ahmadiyya cemetery and made it an issue. Subsequently the DCO gave decision in the favour of Ahmadis. The opponents’ plea against the decision was rejected by the Commissioner also. They took the case to the Revenue Board. Now they attempted to take law in their own hand.

**Faith-based police case against Ahmadis**

*Quetta; October 11, 2017:* Mr. Naseer Ahmad Farooqi, the District Amir of Ahmadiyya community in Quetta and the President of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya Rabwah (the main body of Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan) have been booked under PPC 419, 420, 427 and 34 with FIR no. 140 in city police station Quetta.

A non-Ahmadi Muhammad Alam aka Baloch Khan captured the land of the Ahmadiyya mosque here which had been sealed by the authorities. When Ahmadis tried to get their land back through legal process, he got registered a fabricated police case against Ahmadis, to maintain his unlawful occupation. This case of Ahmadiyya property is still sub-judice, and the aim of this false police case is to harass Ahmadis.

Moreover, Baloch Khan also threatened Mr. Mahmood Ahmad Bhatti, the Ahmadi lawyer who is pleading the Ahmadiyya case in the court. Mr. Bhatti had to lodge an application against this threat to life.
Another FIR: against seven Ahmadi

Lahore; October 25, 2017: Hasan Muaviya, a brother of widely known Maulvi Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, is an anti-Ahmadiyya religious thug in Lahore. He is the main instigator in different police cases against Ahmadis. He managed to get another police case registered in Lahore against Ahmadi elders who reside in far-away Rabwah. It is learnt that on October 25, 2017 at 00:30 an FIR was registered in police station Gujjar Pura, Lahore against seven Ahmadis. The time of the FIR is worth noting. One purpose was to get two Ahmadis arrested from the court premises where they were to appear before a court the next day. The FIR was registered under PPC 295-A, 298-C and ATA 11-W.

The Ahmadis implicated in the case are:
1. Mr. Tahir Mahdi Imtiaz (Printer monthly Tehrike Jadid)
2. Mr. Abdul Sami Khan (Editor daily Alfazl)
3. Mr. Ihsanullah Dansih (Ahmadiyya missionary, Editor monthly Tehrike Jadid – Urdu)
4. Mr. Shahid Mahmood (Ahmadiyya missionary, Editor monthly Tehrike Jadid – English)
5. Mr. Rashid Minhas (Ahmadiyya missionary, Manager monthly Tehrike Jadid)
6. Mr. Nafees Ahmad Ateeq (Ahmadiyya missionary, Publisher monthly Tehrike Jadid)
7. Mr. Amir Faheem (Ahmadiyya missionary, composer monthly Tehrike Jadid)

It should be noted that the police in Lahore obliges Muaviya so readily as to register a very serious case at very short notice against Ahmadi personages living in a remote district, accusing them of crime under the Anti-terrorism Act and a blasphemy clause. This subordination of police in the provincial capital to a petty religious thug deserves no other adjective than ‘disgraceful’.

Follow-up. Mr. Tahir Mahdi Imtiaz, a printer and Mr. Abdul Sami Khan, Editor daily Alfazl went to Lahore to attend a police case in court on October 26. When they came out of the court after the hearing, Hasan Muaviya and his gang of approximately 15 mullas intercepted them. They manhandled Mr. Tahir Mahdi and attempted to detain and take him to the police station under the FIR which was lodged the previous day in Gujjar Pura police station. They took law enforcement in their hands. In the attempt they tore his shirt. Luckily Mr. Imtiaz managed to escape the scene.

The police took no action against Muaviya for his thuggery – of course.

Booked for trivial misdemeanor

Rabwah: Mr. Naveed A Khan, an Ahmadi from Sukkur was on a visit to Rabwah. He stayed with a relative there. On October 23, 2017 he undertook routine maintenance on his licensed 9 m.m. pistol. On completion, he fired a few shots in the air for trial.

Not far from where he was staying, mullas have built a madrassah. Hearing the shots, they came running, raised hue and cry and reported to the police, falsely accusing Mr. Khan and others of attacking them.

Mr. Khan got apprehensive and quit the place. The mullas mounted heavy pressure on senior police officials over this non-issue. The latter, as a result, directed Ahmadi leadership to present Mr. Khan. They did that, and the police booked him under T.P. 337H2 and violation of A02015-A013/20/65/2B.

The accused had to present Rs 50,000/- as security bond for release on bail.
Ahmadis denied constitutional protection – for reasons

Lahore; October 18, 2017: Rana Sanaullah, the law minister in the Punjab gave a strange and unlawful reason to deny constitutional rights to Ahmadis in the Punjab. The daily Dawn reported the following in its issue of October 18, 2017 (extract):

Rana Sana tells PA his remarks were misconstrued

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Law Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan on Tuesday told the Punjab Assembly that his remarks in a television talk show were misconstrued and he had actually said that the Constitution provides full religious freedom to all the minorities in Pakistan, but this could not be given to Ahmadis as they do not consider themselves a minority.

This is bizarre. First you deny in law a group their religious freedom to self-identity, then you deny them the Constitutional rights and religious freedom because they protest the wrong done to them initially. Illogical logic!

In another statement quoted in the press, he said, “Ahmadis, more than any other non-Muslim minority, are more dangerous to the Islamic faith.” (The daily Din; Lahore, October 10, 2017), What a statement from a provincial minister, holding Law portfolio!

Major anti-Ahmadiyya conference in Rabwah

Rabwah; 19-20 October 2017: Mullahs hold numerous hostile conferences in the headquarters town of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan every year. They held one recently on September 7, 2017. We reported it in the September news-report. Every time Ahmadiyya officials wrote to the authorities to disallow such hateful conferences in their home-town, but the authorities not only allow but also facilitate these sectarian rallies. This time again the Ahmadiyya office wrote to the authorities. But the conference was fully facilitated by the authorities. Mulas from all over Pakistan participated in it, including Maulana Fazlur Rahman of JUI-F and Liaquat Baloch of JI. They all made sectarian and hateful speeches against the Ahmadiyya community.

This 36th annual Khatme Nabuwwat conference was held in five sessions. All mullas spoke venomously against Ahmadis and their elders. A few excerpts of the speeches are given below:

Jewish lobby wants that all religions in the country avail freedom of preaching; this will disintegrate Muslims… Qadnais are infidels; disgrace is their destiny; universal infidelity is the substance of Mirzai anatomy. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani (Founder of Ahmadiyyat) was a big thief, fraud and the head of the kuff. Qadianis are basically shameless; Stop dealing with Qadianis and meeting them; this is a Dajjali (Anti-Christ) sect; they are the enemies of Islam and traitors to Pakistan and the Muslim people, etc.

Liaquat Baloch (JI) said, “O Qadianio! Listen, we would not let your conspiracy succeed.”

Maulvi Ibtsaim Ilahi Zaheer, another rabidly anti-Ahmadi mulla, said, “… those who consider Qadianis to be Muslims, are not Muslims… Qadiani sect was set up by the British, only to divide the Muslims… nobody can stop us in the whole world from raising slogans about Qadianis’ infidelity… ”

Maulvi Fazlur Rahman, president of JUI-F said, “Listen O Qadianis! Our elders have chased you in the past, now we’ll do that all over the world… America and western powers want to demolish our religious institutions … the government should not oppose us, otherwise we’ll confront it from every platform.”

Following resolutions were passed at the conference, inter alia:

- Qadianis should not be commissioned in Pak Army.
- Sharia punishment for apostasy (death) should be enforced in the country.
- Religion column should be added to the National Identity Card so that it is easy for common man to differentiate between a Muslim and a non-Muslim.
The constitutional amendments (sic) 7B and 7C regarding Qadianis (participation in elections) should be restored in their original format. The district administration provided wholesome support to the conference. High level security was provided. Approximately 10,000 men were brought over from far and near, most of them from KPK. Free food and accommodation was provided to them. Heavy power generators were deployed. Medical facilities, emergency services were provided. The question is: who met the costs and how?

Ahmadis were affected to the extent that all schools were closed in the town. Women and children were advised to stay at home. Ahmadi youth had to remain alert to defend against any aggressive move by these hostile visitors. The businesses remained shut. Rabwah looked like a town under siege.

**Tension in Sanghar (Sindh)**

*Sanghar; October, 2017:* Anti-Ahmadiyya sentiments are promoted actively in Sanghar. Opponents remain busy in spreading hate against Ahmadis. Following incidents illustrate.

An iron grill was ordered for the Ahmadiyya mosque. When an Ahmadi contacted for its installation, the grill-maker refused his services for the Ahmadiyya mosque. Ahmadis had to hire another installer.

An Ahmadi Mr. Mubarak Ahmad opened his new shop ‘Mubarak Electronics’. His shop is located near a mosque. Two of his workers are non-Ahmadis, and the mullas prompt them to leave the job but they have resisted this advice. One day Mr. Mubarak Ahmad was intercepted by a mulla who abused him. Mr. Ahmad decided not to respond in kind.

Another Ahmadi, Mr. Maqbool Ahmad hired a new shop near the grain market in Sanghar. Mullas told the shop owner to get his shop vacated. The shop-owner didn’t oblige the mullas, so they themselves came over to the shop to dislodge the Ahmadi. Mr. Maqbool contacted the Rangers on whose intervention, the mullas withdrew.

**False and hateful anti-Ahmadiyya propaganda in the daily Ausaf, Lahore**

*Lahore:* The vernacular daily Ausaf is one of those newspapers that have adopted the policy of maligning Ahmadis routinely and excessively. In this, the daily violates the provisions of the National Action Plan as also the decent norms of journalism. It fabricates news, when there is nothing to report, and prints these in multiple headlines. Also the wording of the news items conveys the prejudice and malice of the editorial staff. Below we produce translation of a three-column news published by this paper on September 27, 2017.

*(Ahmadi) Youth disgusted by the filthy language and frivolous language of Mirza Ghulam. Qadianis put a ban on their books.*

Hundreds of educated youth feel dissatisfied with illogical views of the cursed Mirza. The Chief of Canadian (Ahmadi) Mission accepts Islam. Now only a few parts of Mirza’s writings of his final years will be available for reading; London (headquarters) will permit and specify these.

In the fine print, the quoted source is ‘Representative’ of Ausaf. It is mentioned that ‘hundreds of educated Qadianis are adopting the Right Path (Non-Ahmadiyya Islam); their Caliph in London will, now onward, authorize the few extracts to be made available for reading; in 2008, open permission to read whatever Mirza wrote was given, but this resulted in conversion to Islam; this resulted in dangerous consequences for the Qadiani community, etc.'
Bigotry and hate-promotion – Pakistan style

Recently, a picture of a donkey cart with a lengthy message written on its backboard went viral in Pakistan on social media. The message is in Urdu; it is anti-Ahmadiyya, a pack of lies, highly abusive and provocative. We attempt its translation below:

A Qadiani is a creature more cunning than a fox, more dangerous than a snake, more shameless than a swine, sheds more false tears than a crocodile, more foolish than a donkey, more coward than a jackal, darker than night, more ignorant than Abu Jahl, enemy of humankind, a product of Jews, brother of Dajjal (Anti-Christ), and a product of falsehood and deceit.

Police officers should be brave like Mehr Nabi Bux Lak.

The drafter of this statement got so carried away by show of prejudice that he cared little for the fact that one who is more cunning than a fox could not be more foolish than a donkey.

The above notice displays that the donkey owner is admirer of some police officer. This officer apparently is quite happy with the publicity he is getting, to the extent that he has not objected to the fellow violating the National Action Plan, all the time, in city streets.

Anti-Ahmadiyya sentiment in some sections of society

Nazimabad, Karachi; October 16, 2017: A non-Ahmadi fellow got printed wedding invitation cards, for his son.

At the top of the card, he had a tradition printed which supported his version of the doctrine of End of prophethood.

This is something new in the social and cultural scene.

Follow-up report from District Khushab

Chak 2 TDA, District Khushab; October 18, 2017: Hateful anti-Ahmadiyya campaign continues in 2 TDA. On October 12, Ahmadis got information that some miscreants intended to harass Ahmadis in the area. They immediately informed the authorities, and met the DPO and told him of the prevailing situation. The DPO instructed the DSP and SHO for appropriate action.

On October 13, opponents gathered almost 150 people from surrounding villages, and invited two clerics as well. One mulla came from Sialkot and the other from Quaidabad. They made hateful speeches against Ahmadis and raised slogans. Ahmadis called the police. SHO himself arrived at the scene with his team and remained there to ensure peace.

Update on major atrocities of 2016

1. CTD raid on Ahmadiyya offices on December 5, 2016. The fake police case registered after the raid was not withdrawn; instead the authorities took it to an Anti-terrorism court. Mr. Sabah ul Zafar and Mr. Idrees Ahmad were denied release on bail. The ATC judge announced three years’ imprisonment for each of them. An appeal against the verdict lies with Lahore High Court.

2. Mob attack on Ahmadiyya mosque in District Chakwal. The mosque remains locked by the authorities. Ahmadis have no place for worship for months. On demand of the riot leadership, a separate police case was registered against Ahmadis, on
orders of a court. One Ahmadi is still in prison. Sixty rioters out of the 67 detained have been released on bail by courts. Plea for bail of Mr. Muhammad Ansar, Ahmadi awaits hearing at the Supreme Court.

3. **Ban on Ahmadiyya publications and periodicals.** The Punjab government issued numerous such notifications early last year. It did that on illegitimate recommendations of the Muttahidah Ulama Board that were in stark violation of the Constitutional guarantees, and the international instruments signed by Pakistan. None of these notifications has been yet withdrawn.

**Ahmadis behind bars**

1. A contrived case was registered against four Ahmadis, Mr. Khalil Ahmad, Ghulam Ahmad, Ihsan Ahmad and Mubashir Ahmad of Bhoiwal, District Sheikhupura under PPCs 295-A, 337-2 and 427 on May 13, 2014 in Police Station Sharaqpur. Mr. Khalil Ahmad was then murdered by a madrassah student, while in police custody, on May 16, 2014. The remaining three accused were arrested on July 18, 2014. A year later a deadly clause PPC 295-C was added to their charge-sheet. A sessions judge has sentenced them to death on October 11, 2017. Appeal against this decision has been made in the High Court.

2. Officials of Punjab’s Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) accompanied by a contingent of the Elite Force raided Shakoor Bhai’s book shop, arrested him and Mr. Mazhar Abbas the shop assistant, a Shia, on December 2, 2015. A speedy trial in an Anti-terrorism court dispensed 5 years’ imprisonment to each of the two accused, while octogenarian Mr. Shakoor was sentenced in addition to three years’ imprisonment under the anti-Ahmadiyya law. He appealed against the verdict and has sought release on bail from the Lahore High Court which has not spared time for almost a year to hear his plea.

3. An armed police contingent of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) carried out a raid on Ahmadiyya central offices and Zia-ul-Islam Press on December 5, 2016 and arrested four Ahmadiyya officials; Mr. Amir Faheem; Mr. Sabah ul Zafar; Mr. Zahid Majeed Mahmud and Mr. Idrees Ahmad. Mr. Sabah ul Zafar and Mr. Idrees Ahmad remained behind bars as bail was not granted to them. The judge announced three years’ imprisonment to both of them. An appeal against the judgment awaits hearing at the Lahore High Court.

4. A violent mob deviated from the authorized route, to attack an Ahmadiyya mosque in Dulmial on December 12, 2016. Forewarned Ahmadis assembled inside their mosque to defend it. In the ensuing riot two persons, an Ahmadi and a non-Ahmadi, died. The police made arrests from both sides, attackers as also defenders. Among the latter, they arrested 4 Ahmadis namely Malik Riaz Ahmad, Mr. Muhammad Ansar, Malik Khurram Abrar and Mr. Naveed Ahmad. The FIR applies numerous clauses of PPC including 302 (for murder) and 7-ATA from the Anti-terrorism Act. A separate case has also been registered against Ahmadis, on orders of a judge. Sixty rioters out of the 67 detained have been released on bail by courts. Mr. Khurram Abrar, Malik Riaz and Mr. Naveed Ahmad were released on bail on September 12, 2017 while the other Ahmadi, Mr. Muhammad Ansar is still behind bars. His bail application is still with the Supreme Court.

5. Two Ahmadis, Mr. Amjad Iqbal Salooni and Mr. Ikram Ilahi were charged under PPC 295-A and the anti-Ahmadiyya 298-C. They were accused of preaching their faith. They were arrested on March 15, 2017. A judge added terrorism clauses to the case and sent it to an Anti-terrorism court. Their pleas for bail were rejected. Now these await hearing in a higher court. The ATA judge observed that terrorism clauses were
not applicable in this case. Their plea for bail now lies in Lahore High Court. They remain behind bars awaiting trial.

From the media

Three (Ahmadis) sentenced to death on blasphemy charge

Mufti Papalzai addresses KN conference in Chenab Nagar in Pashto; audience fascinated.

Capt. Safdar seeks ban on hiring Ahmadis in military, judiciary

PA echoes with Khatme Nabuwwat issue

Khatme-i-Nabuwwat declaration restored (in Senate)

A few religious parties intend to create tensions over KN: Interior Minster

Religious party activists block motorway (over KN in Lahore)

Chiniot ulama demand sealing of Chenab Nagar followed by a grand operation

We shall courageously fight conspiracies regarding non-Muslim minority status of Qadianis: Fazl ur Rehman (JUI)

Tehrik Labaik YR sit-in continues (in Islamabad)

One who plays around with Khatme Nabuwwat law will call for his death. Fazlur Rahmann (JUI)

Jamaat Islami declares demonstration on 20 October over Khatme Nabuwwat

Pervaiz Ilahi meets Fazlur Rahman in Makka; agree on no compromise over Khatme Nabuwwat

Only state can declare jihad, says minister (Ahsan Iqbal). Urges religious leaders to reject (anti-government) edicts posted on social media about Khatme Nabuwwat issue.

Qadianis are declared enemies (khule dushman) of Islam and Pakistan. Their headquarters are in Tel Aviv. We shall spare no sacrifice to defend the belief in end of prophethood (KN): Awais Noorani, secretary general JUP

Tinkering with KN laws amounts to playing with fire and blood: Speakers at conference in Chenab Nagar

We shall sacrifice hundreds of thousand lives on KN: Dr Mubashir Ahmad (JI)

The (introduced) amendment to the statement on Khatme Nabuwwat is an agenda of the West: (Mulla) Ghulam Mohiuddin (of Labaik Ya Rasul Ullah)
Qadianis are traitors of the Faith and the Country. Rana Sanaullah should be fired: KN conference

Suicide attack on Fatehpur Tomb (in Balochistan) claims 18 (later 21) dead including 2 policemen; 40 injured

Seven policemen, passer-by killed in Quetta suicide blast

Four FC troops searching for kidnappers martyred in blasts (in FATA)

Three Shia Hazaras among five dead in Quetta

Eight Ansarul Sharia militants killed in Karachi ‘encounter’

I do not have to prove to anybody that I am a Muslim; this is between me and my Allah (God): Maj General Asif Ghafoor DG ISPR

Some people are indulging in baseless criterion and making unsuccessful efforts to draw political benefits through Khatme Nabuwwat. This is immoral and undemocratic: (JUI)

Qadianis are also Muslims: Rana Sanaullah (Law Minister Punjab)

Ahmadis, more than any other non-Muslim minority, are more dangerous to the Islamic faith. Rana Sana (Law Minister, Punjab)

Only state has right to declare jihad: Ahsan

Ulama themselves do not consider Qadianis as Non-Muslim: Rana

They offer Salat, observe fast, build mosques, call Azan; a fatwa is something else. Qadianis do not call themselves Non-Muslims: Provincial Minister on private TV

Unlawful detention of Hafiz Saeed should be undone forthwith: Milli Yakjehti Council

(Safdar’s) Hate speech in Parliament condemned

Lahore High Court Bar: Resolution adopted to cancel Rana Sanaullah’s membership and lifelong ban on entry (for allegedly pro-Ahmadi statement)

72 killed in suicide attacks on Afghan mosques

Death toll from Mogadishu blast rises to 230

Trump strikes blow Iran N-deal in major policy shift

Taj Mahal struck off tourism list

More than 200 mosques attacked in Europe and UK in past 12 months

(PAK) Army Chief meets Saudi crown prince
Pakistan elected to UN rights body (HRC)  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 17, 2017*

Five killed in US drone strike near Pak-Afghan border. AP put the total 20 (in aerial bombing on Haqqani network)  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 17, 2017*

European approval: Cursed Asia nominated for Sakharov Award  
*The daily Ausaf; Lahore, October 4, 2017*

58 dead at Las Vegas concert in deadliest US shooting  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 3, 2017*

I condemn Khwaja Asif’s statement. He spoke against a Pakistani citizen and an Islamic scholar (Aalam e Deen) to please Americans: Senator Siraj-ul-Haq (JI)  
*The daily Mashriq; Lahore, October 3, 2017*

US approves sale of $15 bn missile system to S. Arabia  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 8, 2017*

The change in End of Prophethood certificate for the election nomination papers, from swearing to affirming, condemned: Shujaat, Pervez Ilahi (PML-Q)  
*The daily Jang; Lahore, October 3, 2017*

Even death is welcome in bondage to the prophet... All parliamentarians including the Speaker who supported or signed the (Election) Bill are Wajib ul Qatl (must be put to death). Those who will hang Zahid Hamid, the law minister and his colleagues will be crowned in gold...Those who tinker with shaheed Bhutto’s constitution have no right to live.”  
*Ad in the daily Aman; Faisalabad, October 7, 2017*

Faith in Khatme Nabuwwat is integral part of Islamic belief; no flexibility possible: Syed Shamsul Arefeen (Federal Minister of State)  
*The daily 92 News; Lahore, October 15, 2017*

Rana Sanaullah is a former spokesman f Qadianis. Why is he not disowned by the rulers: Chaudhry Pervaiz Ilahi (PML-Q)  
*The daily Abtak; Lahore, October 15, 2017*

Rana Sana is a supporter of Qadianis. When will Shahbaz kick him out? Sirajul Haq (JI)  
*The daily Islam; Lahore, October 22, 2017*

Minister behind change of Khatm-i-Nabuwwat oath be ousted: Shahbaz  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 5, 2017*

Court indicts Sharif family for corruption  
*The daily Dawn; Lahore, October 20, 2017*

Nawaz Sharif elected unopposed PML (N) Chief for four years  
*The daily Mashriq; Lahore, October 4, 2017*

Nawaz Sharif case: Rangers refuse entry to federal ministers in the court.  
State within state shall not be tolerated: Interior Minister  
*The daily Mashriq; Lahore, October 3, 2017*

CM (Shahbaz Sharif) arranges reconciliation between Maryam and Hamza (son of Shahbaz)  
The uncle and niece met after six-months.  
*The daily Mashriq; Lahore, October 18, 2017*

Capt. ® Safdar calls on Golra Sharif grave  
*The daily Express; Lahore, October 14, 2017*

The British (Angrez) are making all efforts against Madrassas and Ulama: Fazlur Rehman (JUI)  
*The daily Abtak; Lahore, October 22, 2017*
Religious parties to form electoral alliance: Siraj

LNG deal, mother of all robberies; 200bn rupees’ corruption: Sh. Rashid

People, not court, gave real verdict: Nawaz

Melee forces judge to put off Sharif’s indictment. Imran Khan accuses PML-N of attacking judiciary; interior minister orders inquiry.

Ahsan urges army spokesman not to comment on economy

PTI to seek Govt stance on Khatme Nabuwwat

ECP suspends membership of 261 legislators (at federal and provincial level)

The rulers are snakes (Aasteen kay samp); they are more dangerous than the US and India: Sirajul Haq (JI)

Body to block blasphemous content on internet

Two children killed, three injured in Indian shelling (in Azad Kashmir)

Over Rs 400bn irregularities in road projects

Minister’s driver, conductor beat passenger to death

Economy is close to extremes: Zardari

Woman gives birth in Ganga Ram underpass

17-year old Pakistani physics student makes waves with peer-reviewed paper on electric honeycombs

Sharma wins Emmy (award in New York) for best documentary

Electric companies strip the government of Rs. 32 billion in one year: Report

Op-ed: Captain Safdar’s demagoguery

It would be far too easy to dismiss Captain Safdar’s rant about Ahmadis as simply insensitive, boorish and ignorant. For the latter knew what he was doing: he was wooing his powerful religious constituency with the poisonous flattery of the demagogue. Bluntly put, he was trying his best to achieve personal and political goals by pandering to the forces of bigotry, hatred and extremism. All of which malign the name of the country, society and Islam. The Qur’an censures religious hypocrites thus: “Among the people there is he whose discourse on the life of the world pleases you, and he calls on God as witness to what is in his heart, yet he is an unyielding and antagonistic adversary. When he turns and leaves, he walks about corrupting the earth, destroying crops and livestock — God loves not corruption (Q2:204–205).”
Since the 1970s, Pakistan has been blighted by violence, mostly perpetrated by Sunni extremist groups against the Shia minority. However, the latter is not the only sect being targeted by such forces in Pakistan. Ahmadis, Hindus, Christians and even Bareli Sunnis are all on the receiving end of this Sunni brutality; which simply adds to the image (and reality) of Pakistan as a hotbed of extremist violence. Religion has been weaponised in the service of majoritarian political objectives; while ordinary people are marked for extermination based on their sectarian affiliations or sympathies. Within this context, Captain Safdar’s comments, which serve to further inflame communal divisions, deserve nothing less than the very strongest condemnation. Ultimately, the best way out of the extremist morass that the country finds itself stuck in — rests in a secular government guaranteeing equal rights for religious minorities.

The Daily Times, October 15, 2017

Op-ed: Forward Taj Mahal too to Pakistan

…The Taj Mahal, mausoleum of his (Emperor Shahjehan) beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal was not built with IMF loans but with Indian money. But, how can I criticize the UP’s tourism department for excluding the Taj from its list and the BJP’s government in Maharashtra for excluding the Mughals from school text books, when my own son is in the dark about the achievements of Chandra Gupt Muriya, although his father got his education in a state school where Muriya Raj and the golden period of Ashoka was a part of Pakistan history.

Wusatullah Khan in the daily Mashriq; October 12, 2017

Op-ed: Much ado

On to a dangerous clown of a different kind — the son-in-law, Safdar.

It was simultaneously an offensive and defensive move, and its repercussions could be severe. First, the offensive dimension: against the boys.

For all the dabbling in mainstreaming and surreptitious support and the like, there is a red line: don’t meddle with the institution itself, and sure as hell not if you’re an outsider.

While that’s always been the case, the counter-insurgency and counterterrorism campaigns have infused a new urgency.

When both sides in a battle shout the same slogans and you need to convince your side that they are on the right side of the war, you don’t want anything to undermine cohesion and purpose.

Safdar’s tirade is deeply uncomfortable because it threatened a religious debate in the very institution where total unity and commitment to the fight against militancy is needed.

And whether it was a mindless tirade or a cynical one, it was made all the worse by familial ties.

But there is a defensive dimension too. NA-120 and the oath controversy in the electoral amendments have combined to present a formula to prise away the N-League’s right-wing support.

With the Sharifs at war with institutions and the PTI having far from faded, the N-League already knew the next election would be an almighty struggle. Then a vulnerability on the party’s right flank emerged.
Outside polite company, in the trenches of constituency warfare, the rank and file and candidates work with hard reality. If religious poison is being used against you, then you spray some of your own around to try and insulate yourself.

The party leadership also understands that. So even if some were alarmed by the tirade and its offensive dimension, they know the speech may have saved the party some votes.

_Cyril Almeida in the daily Dawn on October 15, 2017_

**Op-ed: Why introduce religion in political wrangle**

...Even in worse days of terrorism, the rallies organized by Sirajul Haq (JI), Maulana Samiul Haq (JUI), Hafiz Saeed and Imran Khan (PTI) were safe (from attack), while the army and other politicians were targeted. Sir, we are tired of reforming ourselves. We have paid heavily for it. A hundred thousand of our people have perished in this strategic depth. For us, our God, Prophet (pbuh), Quran, Salat, fasting, worship and prayers suffice. For this sake, please do not sprinkle religion on politics. We have suffered unbearable losses, our backs are bent; please have pity on this nation.

_Husnain Jamal in the Mashriq; October 12, 2017_

**Op-ed: Pakistan, Land of the Intolerant**

Karachi: Pakistan – This country has a poor record of protecting its religious minorities, but we outdo ourselves when it comes to Ahmadis. Members of the sect insist on calling themselves Muslims, and we mainstream Muslims insist on treating them like the worst kind of heretics.


Annexes:

I. AHRC statement, PAKISTAN: Court sentences Ahmadis to death
II. An ad by a PPP leader, in the daily Aman; Faisalabad, Oct 7, 2017
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
AHRC-STM-136-2017
24 October 2017

A Statement by the Asian Human Rights Commission

PAKISTAN: Court sentences Ahmadis to death

Three Ahmadis were sentenced to death on blasphemy charges by the Islamabad court of sessions on 12 October 2017, for allegedly tearing down a poster outside their place of worship. Incidentally, the sentence came within hours of a hate speech delivered on the floors of the National Assembly, by the son-in-law of deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who stated that Ahmadis are a threat to Pakistan’s national ideology.

The three men, Mubashar Ahmad, Ghulam Ahmad and Ehsaan Ahmad, together with Khaleel Ahmed, tore down posters outside the Ahmadi mosque on 11 May 2014, calling on the people of Bhoiwaal village to kill Ahmadis and ostracise them. A case no. 219/14 was registered against them at the Sharkpur police station, District Sheikhupura under Section 295 A of the Pakistan Penal Code, which provides punishment for “Deliberate and malicious act intended to outrage religious feeling of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs”.

Five days later, on May 16, local resident Mr. Muhammad Saleem entered the police station and shot dead Khaleel Ahmad. The other three accused were then shifted to a jail in Sheikhupura.

Three years later, the court added Section 295 C (Use of derogatory remarks in respect of the prophet) during the hearing, and announced death sentences for all three Ahmadis. Moreover, the Court fined them two hundred thousand Rupees each. In case of non-payment they would receive six month jail sentences.

According to the 1995 census, Ahmadis make up a mere 0.25 percent of Pakistan’s population. And yet, the State fears their presence and deems their existence a threat to national ideology. The State has appointed its ‘Counter Terrorism Force’ to terrorize the hapless community and to restrain them from professing their religion.

While politicians and civil servants use official platforms to spew hatred against the beleaguered community, the Pakistan government continues to deny its persecution of the Ahmadis to the international community. In a conference held recently at the U.S. Institute of Peace, Pakistan’s Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Aizaz Chaudhry, vehemently denied any ‘state sponsored’ persecution of the Ahmadiyya minority, stating, “I do not agree with you that there is State sponsorship of such activity. Far from that, all citizens of Pakistan are equal in their rights under the Constitution.”

Contrary to Mr. Chaudhry’s statement of equality, the promulgation of the anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance has led to the demolishing of 27 Ahmadiyya mosques, while 33 mosques have been sealed off. A further 21 Ahmadiyya mosques have been set on fire or damaged, and 17 mosques have been forcibly occupied.

Other tactics used to persecute and harass the community include transforming Ahmadi towns. For instance, the Punjab Provincial Assembly in 1999 changed the name of Rabwah town to Chenab Nagar, and allocated hundreds of housing projects to non-Ahmadis settlers, to transform the town and drive away the Ahmadis.

As if social, economic, legal and religious persecution was not enough, the masses have been instigated to kill Ahmadis as a service to religion. These spiteful murderers are then celebrated as heroes. Many Ahmadis accused of blasphemy have been killed in jail by police officers. Not a single person responsible was ever caught or punished. In 2008, during a live broadcast, religious scholar Dr. Amir Liaquat encouraged his audience to kill the infidels as a service to Islam. Two Ahmadis were gunned down within hours of the broadcast.
According to records kept by the Ahmadiyya community since 1984, when blasphemy laws were amended to include several Ahmadi-specific clauses, more than 250 Ahmadis have been killed. Pakistan continues to deny Ahmadi Muslims the basic right to self-identity. The notorious and draconian second amendment in the Constitution, added to appease the orthodox clergy, is the only kind in constitutional history, whereby a group of people lost their rights to even exist. With its passage, Pakistan became the first and only country to judge the faith of its citizens. In order to be eligible for Pakistan’s ‘Muslim’ passport, citizens are required to condemn the Ahmadis.

Furthermore, Ordinance XX, of Pakistan’s Penal Code criminalizes the daily lives of Ahmadis for ‘posing as Muslims’. Thousands of Ahmadis have hence been jailed for the ‘crimes’ of praying, saying the salaam (Muslim greeting), saying the Kalima (Islamic creed), reading the Quran, and so forth.

According to a statement by Law Minister Mr. Rana Sanaullah, “it is our duty to protect minorities of the country, but for the Ahmadis, they will first have to stop claiming to be Muslims. There is no other way around it.”

Denied the freedom of speech, of religion, of assembly, and virtually every single right guaranteed under the Constitution, the Ahmadiyyas find no redressal from any pillar of the state. With no right to political representation either, the community is virtually voiceless.

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has long demanded that Pakistan’s blasphemy laws be abolished. These laws were made and amended during the military regime of General Ziaul Haq, with the aim of spreading bigotry and religious hatred among the different Islamic sects.

The AHRC also advocates legislators to review the Sections 295 C, 298 B with all sub-classes and 298 C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). These sections of the PPC are the main sources instigating fundamentalists to take the law into their own hands and annihilate religious opponents. The government should ensure that all laws are in line with Pakistan’s constitutional and international human rights obligations.

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The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) works towards the radical rethinking and fundamental redesigning of justice institutions in order to protect and promote human rights in Asia. Established in 1984, the Hong Kong based organisation is a Laureate of the Right Livelihood Award, 2014.

Annex II

An ad by a PPP leader, in the daily Aman; Faisalabad, Oct 7, 2017

Translation (extract): “Even death is welcome in bondage to the Prophet... All parliamentarians including the Speaker who supported or signed the (Election) Bill are Wajib ul Qatl (must be put to death). Those who will hang Zahid Hamid, the law minister and his colleagues will be crowned in gold. Those who tinker with Shaheed Bhutto’s constitution have no right to live.” Haji Sheikh Afzal ...