Politics of Persecution

2017

A new Act to deny ‘forever’ the right of vote to Ahmadis in democratic Pakistan

An unusual thing happened this year. The Pakistani state corrected a major wrong done to Ahmadis – after 32 years. It facilitated them right of vote as citizens – only to withdraw it later at one howl of the mulla.

Also, 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 would happen by next week. Last quarter of this year was one such occasion.

A revised Election Bill was under preparation by a parliamentary committee since July 2014. It passed through the sieve of the National Assembly and the Senate and the President signed it into law on October 2, 2017.

The Election 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.
2. A candidate filing papers for nomination to contest general elections was now required to ‘declare’ his faith in the End of Prophethood (KN) 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 eligible for voting.)

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

Events of October 2 and thereafter expose the insidious, wily and dangerous nature of politics and media in present day Pakistan.

Islamist political parties, the rabidly anti-Nawaz Sharif (NS) political opposition and the mullas of all hues raised hell over the change of wording from ‘I solemnly swear’ to ‘I declare’
in the End of Prophethood affidavit 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, against the ruling party, but also 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. He ordered restoration of the KN declaration and all other provisions concerning End of Prophethood (read Ahmadis) 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. 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.

However, 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, partly because the clause concerning the ‘disqualified person’ remained put, and consequently Mr. Sharif was installed as president of his party without delay. Anyway, the hype generated by this KN 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.

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 the person 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 political opponents were cashing on the KN and ‘Qadiani’ issues, so why not turn the tables and take the lead on these issues. They decided to launch their own unguided missile, Captain ® M. Safdar, the son-in-law of the former PM.

Capt. (R) Safdar mounted a vociferous attack against the Ahmadi community, on a point of order in the National Assembly, describing them as ‘threat to the country’ and demanded that its members be banned from induction into the government and military services, etc.

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 brooks no exceptions.”

Deplorably, 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.”

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. Hamdani, 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.”

Sunni Tahrir and Tahrik Labbaik Ya Rasul–Ullah (TLY). These politico-religious parties comprise primarily of Barelvi members. Their leaders have decided that agitating the Ahmadiyya issue and the KN controversy is a short cut to gain common man’s sympathy and vote. In the recent past they have attempted to outdo others in holding anti-Ahmadi rallies and conferences. Mullahs Jalali, Khadim Hussain Rizvi, Afzal Qadri, Pir Hamid ud Din Sialwi etc. are the leading Barelvis. They co-operate on political issues, when it suits them.

The Labbaik group assessed the KN ‘declaration’ issue as one whereby they could claim more than their share of the political cake. They not only joined the on-going agitation, they declared to undertake a long march from Lahore to the federal capital on 6 November. This was a major undertaking to cause concern to the administration – and to Ahmadis, of course.

The Sunni Tahrir 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.

This issue was agitated further and reached its climax at the end of November.

Although the government had already accepted the main demand of the mullahs, the TLY sit-in (Dharna) demonstrators at the strategic Faizabad crossing, just outside Islamabad, upgraded their demands to the following:

1. Those parliamentarians who conspired against the belief in End of Prophethood should be fired forthwith and punished as per Constitution.
2. Rana Sanaullah should be fired and tried for rebellion against the Constitution.
3. Cursed Aasia (the Christian woman) should be hanged as per court verdict.
4. A Sunni ulama board should be established to control Qadianis’ mischiefs in Pakistan, and the ban on Ahmadis’ practice of Islamic worship etc. should be made effective.
5. The persecuted Rohingya Muslims should be supported and diplomatic relations with Myanmar should be severed.
6. Restrictions imposed on all-round loud-speakers in mosques should be lifted. (sic)

The demonstrators settled down at the interchange and their leaders undertook planning and implementing their strategy of a wider and longer unrest and a threat to law and order.
The TLY issued a call for a major strike and protest in Lahore on November 3. It was widely publicized, and Friday sermons were delivered on the theme of ‘Honour of the Prophet’. Ahmadis had to take special measures that day to protect their places of worship and the worshipers. The government found it convenient to come to the following agreement with TLY mullas:

1. The issue of changes to the wording of the affidavit in the new Act will be investigated and the findings made public within 20 days. Those found guilty of any conspiracy will be punished under law. The ulama will be taken in confidence by the government over the enquiry and its findings.
2. The criminal Aasia found guilty of blasphemy will be punished as per law. All rumors concerning sending her abroad are baseless. It is not even being considered.
3. The government will form an effective advisory national council comprising distinguished ulama to implement constitutional provisions regarding the deniers of Khatme Nabuwwat (KN), their conspiracies and their violations of law specific to them (read Ahmadis).
4. The government of Pakistan will continue its diplomatic, political and moral support to Rohingya Muslims. It is pursuing the scheme of their rehabilitation, in league with Turkey. The government will make its plan public and play an effective role.
5. Rana Sanaullah, the provincial law minister will further explain his position regarding some video clips, in the presence of well-known Ahle Sunnat ulama.
6. The federal government will urge the Punjab government to follow the same policy as other provinces and the capital regarding sound-amplifiers in mosques, and will play its role to lift restrictions on the number of loud-speakers in mosques in the province. (sic)

The agreement was signed by a federal minister and other high officials as also by four leaders of TLY and the ST.

As a result, the Dharna came to an end – but only temporarily. Another long march, led by Maulvi Khadim Hussain Rizvi made a sortie from Data Darbar in Lahore to Islamabad on November 6, 2017. All these days, Ahmadis were bad-mouthed in speeches, rallies, meetings, social media, print and electronic media, etc. Their situation was potentially precarious.

The sit-in at Faizabad was strengthened and, with no regard to the agreements already made, the traffic was blocked by the protestors. This caused great inconvenience to the public, including school children, patients heading for hospitals, women going to their jobs and daily wage earners. The miscreants manhandled anybody who resisted their directions. Law-enforcing personnel did not interfere; perhaps they were directed to stay clear.

The protest leaders used extremely foul language against the ruling elite and those who did not approve of their conduct. They even issued threats to federal ministers in public addresses and sermons. Pir Afzal Qadri unabashedly said, “They (the rulers) should be very careful because our supporters can harm their children.” The daily Dawn, November 11, 2017

At this stage the Islamabad High Court intervened as it had been approached by a mulla Allah Wasaya of KN, by the TLY, as also by a few other individual citizens. Judge Shaukat Siddiqui took the liberty of venting his sentiments and opinions. He was angry over the inconvenience caused to the public by the protestors, and ‘advised’ the protesters to end the sit-
in. He was sympathetic to the anti-Ahmadi demands, and ordered cancellation of all the amendments in sections relevant to Khatme Nabuwwat in the Election Act 2017. Mulla Allah Wasaya also demanded that the government setup a database of employees belonging to the Ahmadi faith; in response to this proposal, the judge told the federal government to submit a reply within 14 days.

The mullas were happy over the judge’s orders that were to the disadvantage of Ahmadis, but decided to disobey his ‘advice’ on lifting the Dharna.

In the face of the slothful government, mullas imposed a massive gridlock that choked the twin cities (The Nation; November 10). In Sialkot, religious zealots attacked a vehicle in which they mistakenly thought federal minister Zahid Hamid was riding.

In any case, the government had the amendments, demanded by the mulla, passed in the National Assembly and then in the Senate on November 17, 2017. Zahid Hamid, the law minister tabled the amendment bill in the Senate session which was presided by, otherwise outspoken, Raza Rabbani. Hamid claimed mutual consensus. He said that the status of Qadianis would remain non-Muslim. He added that if a person gets himself or herself enrolled as Muslim in the voters’ list, any other person could challenge this before the revising authority where he or she would be required to sign the declaration of the finality of prophethood. Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, the Interior Minister stated that the law on KN for voters had been further ‘strengthened’ than before, and as an Act it will remain operative till the doomsday (Qiyamat). He asserted: “The country, its parliament, government and armed forces were there to safeguard the finality of prophethood”. His pleas and entreaties proved wasteful, as the sit-in was not lifted by the mulla.

On November 24, the Punjab Assembly passed a resolution to make the ‘End of Prophethood’ a part of school syllabus and a compulsory subject for Muslim students. Belatedly, Lahore Bar Association announced a strike on November 25 and demanded resignation of the Federal law minister. ‘Those guilty of these disgusting crimes (ghanowney) should be held accountable’, they said.

At this stage Allama Rizvi, a TLY leader stepped-up his demand further: “Now, not one minister, but the entire cabinet will have to leave.”

As a result of the mounting pressure from the public, the high judiciary, the civil society and the political gains made by the mulla and the opposition, the government decided to order the police on Nov 25 to lift the sit-in. Simultaneously, the Interior Ministry placed huge ads in newspapers stating the government’s position on the issue and restating that the belief in KN was an integral part of 200 million Pakistani Muslims and the parliament was its guardian.

The police action was resisted by the demonstrators. They set fire to 10 police vehicles and occupied many more thorough-fares. The police arrested more than 150 persons. Reportedly 7 persons died; some place the count higher. Emergency was declared in twin-cities’ hospitals. The resistance spread to some other cities and towns in the Punjab and to Karachi and Peshawar. At the end of the day, the Faizabad site was still occupied by the mullas of TLY. Many policemen were injured. Some reports allege strange developments. Having failed to lift the sit-in, the government called out the army.
The army responded with the army chief’s call to the prime minister with recommendation that ‘the dispute be solved peacefully, as violence was not in national interest’.

The army then intervened and acted as the arbitrator between the two parties, the TLY and the government of Pakistan.

As a result, an agreement was agreed upon and signed by the parties. Major General Faiz Hamid signed as ‘Through’ (Bawasatat). The demands of protestors were met with the resignation of Law Minister Zahid Hamid. TLY undertook not to issue an edict (fatwa) against him. The government agreed to:

- Make public the Enquiry Report of Raja Zafar ul Haq committee within 30 days and take action against those held responsible.
- All the arrested protestors would be released and police cases withdrawn against them.
- An Enquiry Board will be formed in consultation with TLY to look into the police action of November 25, and take action against those held responsible.
- The government will pay up for all damages to public and private property during the Dharna.
- Whatever had been agreed by the Punjab Government (earlier) will be implemented in letter and spirit.
- This agreement has been arrived at through special efforts of COAS General Bajwa and his team. Thanks to them for saving the nation from a catastrophe.

The federal government made this deal with mulla Khadim Hussain Rizvi (of TYL) who is on record to have declared that the day Islam prevailed in the country, there shall be only one option for Ahmadis: “Recite the Kalima or have your necks chopped. (Jis din Islam aa gia, Mirzaian de barey wich ik hee faisala hona ai: Kalima parho, ya gardan katwao.)” www.Fb.com/rizvimedia92/...

It was reported through https://www.dawn.com/news/1373197 that according to Rizvi (of TLY), in addition to the terms mentioned in the document, the following demands of TLY were also accepted by the government, inter alia:

1. No difficulty will be faced in registering cases under clause 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (the blasphemy law).
2. No leniency will be given to those convicted by courts of blasphemy.
3. The foreign and interior ministers will take steps for the release of Dr Aafia Siddiqui after taking her mother and sister in confidence.
4. Two representatives of Tahrik-i-Labbaik will be included in the textbook board assigned to decide changes.
5. Every year, November 25 will be observed as “Martyrs of Prophet’s honour day”.

There has been no official confirmation or denial of agreeing to these demands from the government’s side.

Consequently the 22-day sit-in at Faizabad Interchange was lifted. Demonstrators in most other cities and towns dispersed and life returned to normal within a day or two, except in Lahore where a sit-in continued at the Mall Road, the main thorough-fare.
The daily Dawn made the following editorial comment in its issue of November 28, 2017 (extract):

**Capitulation**
IT is surrender so abject that the mind is numb and the heart sinks.
The deal negotiated between the state, both civilian and military facets of it, and the Faizabad protesters is a devastating blow to the legitimacy and moral standing of the government and all state institutions.
In one brief page and six gut-wrenching points, the state of Pakistan has surrendered its authority to a mob that threatened to engulf the country in flames. The federal law minister has been sacked – in return for a promise by the protesters to not issue a fatwa against him....

Subsequent to the agreement, there was a break in the leadership of the *Dharna*. The break-away mallas accused the others of selling the lives of the *Dharna* martyrs for only 215 million rupees. *(The daily Awaz, Lahore; November 30, 2017)*

Following is also relevant to this *Dharna*:
- The Supreme Court observed that activities of *Dharna* activists were opposed to Quranic teachings.
- Islamabad High Court declares Faizabad sit-in a terrorist act.

*(The daily Dawn; November 25, 2017)*
- Lahore High Court rejected a plea to order registration of police case against Captain ® Safdar, on November 19, 2017.
- Supreme Court reminded the government on November 23 of the option of tough measures.
- “I shall not let slip away those who amended the Khatme Nabuwwat law”, said Justice Siddiqui of IHC.

*(The daily Islam; November 25, 2017)*
- We cannot give license of shooting straight: Justice Siddiqui of IHC

*(The daily Express; November 25, 2017)*
- On November 21 the Interior Ministry implored the protestors to lift *Dharna*, by quoting Quran and Hadith, as also the orders of Islamabad High Court.

A brief resume of the performance of major social actors in this episode would be appropriate.

**Print media.** Vernacular print media mostly behaved very badly in support of the anti-Ahmadi campaign, as always. Approximately 1500 news items etc. were published; however, it did not print even once an Ahmadi’s comment. 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. 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.
**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 of their right of vote. 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. In these two months, if the electronic media spent almost 1000 hours over the mulla’s demands, it did not spare 10 minutes for Ahmadis to state their view.

**Social media.** Social media provided a convenient outlet for discussion and exchange of views. A more balanced and fairer picture emerged from the inputs to this media. One Farnood Alam wrote an excellent article in Urdu on website Humsab.com.pk.

**Politics.** Pakistan politics were exposed fully during 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.

The Jamaat Islami, Sunni Ittehad Council, Milli Yakjehti Council (JUP), JUI-F, joined the propaganda riot as spoilers.

Raja Zafar ul Haq (PML-N), Maulana Fazlur Rahman (JUI), Shah Mahmud Qureshi (PTI), Mir Zafrulla Jamali (PML-N), Ch. Pervaiz Ilahi (PML-Q), etc. also added fuel to fire.

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 Ulama 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 totally unacceptable to all those leaders of bigotry. They unleashed a storm against the Rana. Some included him in the list of kafirs over his statement. Others demanded his removal. He was guilty of only speaking some truth.

**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. 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 advertise in the press its faith and commitment to KN. A large sum of money was thus spent to publish quarter-page color ads in newspapers, asserting: “Democratic government is determined that this fundamental belief of Muslims will never come to any harm. …

“Also, this is the call of the honour of the Prophet.” Seal. Interior Ministry, Govt of Pakistan
**General.** None of the players of this fateful game ever admitted in plain language that it was all about denying Ahmadi citizens their right of vote. They covered their demands in technical terms of ‘7B’, ‘7C’, ‘solemnly swear’, ‘declare’, ‘believe’, etc.

At no stage, nobody mentioned that in fact Ahmadis also believe in the Khatme Nabuwwat, except when the embattled Interior Minister did drop a hint to that effect. The sly mulls did not take the risk of even blaming him, as that would have exposed their deceit.

Last but not least, the Interior Minister undertook in clause 6 that the Punjab Government would implement all that was agreed earlier between the two parties. Punjab government is known for its exceptional harshness in maltreating Ahmadis in the province, on behest of its Ulama Board. Tightening the screw further could result, in the opinion of the savant Y.L. Hamdani: “One fears for the safety and well-being of members of this (Ahmadiyya) community who now live in the shadow and threat of violence and even genocide in the country.” *Daily Times; November 27, 2017*

**In our opinion,** the rulers unnecessarily took the devious path of disowning the elimination of the KN rules in the Election Act. They should have said plainly that in order to have genuine Joint Electorate they did away with a dictator’s unsupportable rules 7B and 7C, and have thus admitted Ahmadis in mainstream politics, as like everyone else they are also citizens of democratic Pakistan. Such bold and straightforward approach would surely have given the PML-N high moral ground to easily demolish the baseless stand of mulls. Honesty is the best policy, say the sage.

It would be appropriate to place on record here a list of persons and organizations that, in our opinion, *inter alia* played a very negative role and those who played a positive role during this potentially catastrophic event. Our criterion for this assessment is: ‘by placing national interest above self-interest’.

**Negative role**

**Political parties:** JI, JUI (F), JUP, PML-Q, PTI, PML-N, PAT
**Newspapers:** 92 News, Khabrain, Nawa-i-Waqt, Daily Express, Ausaf
**Individuals:** Ch. Shujaat Hussain, Sh. Rashid Ahmad, Mufti Muneeb, Tahir Ashrafi, Mubashir Luqman, Sabir Shakir, Sami Ibrahim, Shahid Masood, Justice ® Nazir Ahmad Ghazi, Ahmad Jamal Nizami, Orya Maqbul Jan, Bushra Rahman, Umar Abbasi of PAT, Dr Danish, Major ® Zaheer, Arif Bhatti, Wadood Qureshi, Asif Mehmud, Ausaf Sheikh, Mohiuddin, Yusuf Siraj, Umar Farooq, and also Justice ® Iftikhar Chaudhary, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, Dr. Safdar Mahmood, Hamid Mir, Haroon ul Rasheed, Dr. Ehsan Bari, Irshad Ahmad Arif
**TV Channels:** 92 News, 24 News
**Groups:** Punjab Assembly, Lahore Bar Association, Mashaikh Convention
(Note: Committed anti-Ahmadi parties and individuals are not included in the above list.)

**Positive role**


Although the Islamabad sit-in (Dharna) ended on November 27, this was not the end of the agitation that was undertaken in the name of Khatme Nabuwwat (KN).

There was a split in the TLY leadership and ranks, and a group led by mulla Ashraf Jalali assembled a Dharna in Lahore where the protestors occupied a central spot on the Mall Road and seriously disturbed the traffic for a few days. The traffic jam in that part was reported as very bad. On December 2, an agreement was reached between the Punjab government and the Dharna leadership.

It was agreed, inter alia, that Muttahida Ulama Board will review the school syllabus in the Punjab with special reference to religious topics (Deeni sha'air). Ashraf Jalali claimed that the government had agreed to appoint Mufti Abid Jalali on the Ulama Board, and that a committee would be formed regarding resignation of Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah.

Rana Sanaullah took a brave stand and decided not to present himself before the clerics. Pir Sialwi is now on the road agitating against the Rana and the PML-N (and Ahmadis, of course) taking out processions and addressing rallies.

During these days, a number of senior but scared politicians of PML-N issued public statements about their faith in Islam, KN, etc.

As for the Dharna in the name of KN, some people have come forth with the truth. Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, the interior minister stated that the sit-in leaders were not interested in the end of prophethood but end of the government. Maulvi Fazl ur Rehman (JUI-F) observed, “The real issue was Nawaz Sharif, but the End of Prophethood was exploited.” Islamabad High Court Judge, Shaukat Siddiqui admonished the authorities over surrender to the protesters. Ms. Gul Bokhari wrote an op-ed in the daily The Nation, stating openly that the sit-in was against the new Act that removed the obstacles in the way of Ahmadis to exercise their voting right. She was perhaps the only one who said so unambiguously.

Commandeering the End of Prophethood for political profit gained currency, and many went for it. Maulvi Tahir Ashrafi of Pakistan Ulama Council advised people to vote for the KN in next elections. Azad Kashmir Assembly passed a resolution that Protection of KN and Rejection of Qadianiat will be added to the AJK Interim Constitution Act, 1974. The Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs announced that the year 2018 will be celebrated as one for Awareness of End of Prophethood.

Ahmadiyya centre has received information from various locations that the successful Dharna and the consequential social environment has worsened communal situation for Ahmadis. Hate and social boycott have picked up in society. This encouraged a right-wing daily
Islam to print an article, titled: Will the 'drama' be played again? It referred to the blood-soaked anti-Ahmadiyya riots in 1953 in the Punjab.

While commenting on the effect and consequences of Dharna, the well-known intellectual Aisha Siddiqa wrote: “Now, it does not matter anymore if Sharia is formally applied or not. Between Khadim Rizvi (of TLY) and Orya Maqbul Jan (an ultra-right intellectual) the state is theirs to claim.”

Looking simultaneously across the border at the hype in cow-devotion, a JUI-F senator remarked: "World War III be fought in the Sub-continent." *(The News, December 6, 2017).* God forbid! *(Note: For more details please see our Monthly Reports for the months of October, November and December 2017.)*

A portentous and telltale ‘All Parties’ conference

Islamabad; February 1, 2017: The vernacular press reported at great length proceedings of an All Parties Namus Risalat (honour of the prophet) Conference held in Dreamland Hotel of Islamabad. The conference was organized by the anti-Ahmadiyya Aalami Majlis Tahaffuze Khatme Nabuwwat. However, the top invitees to the conference were primarily political clerics; a sprinkling from some political parties was also in the recipe.

Those who attended included Fazlur Rahman (JUI), Samiul Haq (JUI-S), Siraj ul Haq (JI), Zafarul Haq (PML-N), Fazlur Rehman Khalil (Ansar ul Ummah), Abul Khair Zubair (JUP), Kafil Bokhari (Ahrar Islam), Tariq Cheema (PML-Q), Ejaz ul Haq (ML-Zia) etc. Only mulla Allah Wasaya, a second line cleric of the KN, was present to represent the sponsors. Apparently the stage was handed over to politico-religious leadership to sell their ware in the name of Honour of the Prophet and the End of Prophethood. The ‘church’ and the ‘state’ came out, hand in hand, to exploit each other to the full. The proceedings reported in the press made that very clear.

Maulvi Fazl Ur Rahman of JUI-F was given the lead role and he read out ‘the declaration’. In this he started off with telling the authorities not to meddle with the blasphemy law 295-C, but then quickly fired all the broadsides on Ahmadiyya targets. He demanded, *inter alia:*

- Qadiani (TV) channels should be banned for their anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan transmissions.
- The decision to change the name of the QA University’s Centre for Physics to Dr Abdul Salam Qadiani should be withdrawn.
- Innocent accused Muslims of Dulmial (riot) should be released and action should be taken against officials who were partial against the wronged (Mazloom) Muslims.
- Desist from returning to Qadianis the nationalized educational institutions.

The Conference, having made these demands, conveyed that these were not empty words to be soon forgotten, but will be pursued with further action if they were not implemented within deadline of one month. A 15-member committee was formed to plan and implement future
course of action. The committee comprised leaders of the participating parties as members, while Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman would head the committee.

Most of the participating leaders addressed the conference. What they said is noteworthy. Siraj ul Haq of Jamaat Islami stated: “Pakistan is the citadel of Islam. If the honour of the Prophet is not upheld here, we have no right to be alive.” He stated that registration of blasphemy cases should be made easier; otherwise people tend to take law in their hand. Protection of ‘end of prophethood’ should be a part of school syllabus. With reference to Hafiz Saeed, he said, “There is no police case against him nor is he under trial in any court. He has been targeted on the call of Modi and Trump. I would like to ask: If tomorrow Modi or Trump press on Pakistan, would the rulers close down Madrassa Akora Khattak, and thereafter shut down Mansura? We’ll sacrifice our lives for the defense of Makka and Madina. Trump will have to remain within his limits.”

Fazlur Rahman Khalil stated that the National Action Plan (NAP) was a conspiracy against religious parties and madrassahs.

Following opinions were aired in the conference and reported in the press (for instance the dailies Ausaf and Islam of February 2, 2017):

- Trump has come out openly against Muslims. There is need to unite against him.
- The government proceeds to hang Mumtaz Qadri overnight, but fails to implement court’s verdict on Aasia Masih.
Police cases should be registered against bloggers.

The disbelievers (Kafir) have given the name ‘terrorism’ to Jihad.

We may have our differences with Hafiz Saeed but the government’s treatment of him is not appropriate. We are all one on religious issues.

Qadianis have dug in abroad against Pakistan. They have never been deprived of basic rights here.

An APC should be called on Chakwal (Ahmadiyya mosque) issue to raise voice in support of wronged Muslims.

Foreign powers attempt to change (school) syllabi; we’ll have to play our role.

‘End of Prophethood’ day should be celebrated every year officially.

Religious and political parties should jointly resist international pressure.

Religious parties should launch the Nizam Mustafa campaign.

All religious parties should stand on one platform to contest the next election.

Any effort to change the blasphemy law will result in violent chaos (fasaad).

Qadianis are active against the country.

The rulers avail of our reaction (to suit their interest).

Raja Zafarul Haq (President PML-N) represented his party in this conference of questionable merit. He took the liberty of speaking for the prime minister: “PM Nawaz Sharif is of the same opinion as the religious parties and the people on the issue of Qadianism and Honour of the Prophet. Qadianis were declared non-Muslims in 1974 but further legislation was delayed till 1984. If Qadianis think that I am responsible for that, I don’t care. The Ulama no longer talk about Qadianis. The new generation should be informed of our beliefs. Organized efforts are under way against Muslims; these are supported by foreign powers. Regardless of our party, the honour of the Prophet is dearer (to us) than any temporal gain. Foreign powers try to change our school syllabi; we’ll have to play our role….

During the same week, Mr. Latif Cheema, Convener of the Joint KN Committee welcomed the statements of federal ministers Ishaq Dar (Finance) and Muhammad Yusuf (Religious Affairs) wherein they reconfirmed government stand that no change will be made to the blasphemy law.

At about the same time a group of leading mullahs wrote a letter to the President on the Ahmadi issue and urged him to ensure ‘Islamic identity of the Pakistani state and implementation of Islamic provisions of the Constitution and the law, and also to send them a reply stating his own opinion and the follow-up.’ (The daily Pakistan; February 6, 2017)

As a follow-up of the February 1 conference, the Milli Yakjehti Council, that claims to be a federation of 25 religious and political parties decided to hold protest rallies on 10 and 17 February. This was to express their displeasure on the detention of Hafiz Saeed, and their demand for protection of Islamic laws. (The daily Express; February 9, 2017)

The daily Jinnah reported on February 3, that Sheikh Abdur Rahman, Imam Kaba (Saudi Arabia) received Saeed Inayatullah of End of Prophethood (Pakistan) and gave him good news that Seerat Chairs will be established in Makka and Medina whereby permanent arrangements
will be made to arrange lectures on KN. Sheikh Rahman congratulated Saeed Inayatullah over his elevation to Amir of International Khatme Nabuwwat Movement. This teaming up of the Saudi and Pakistani dignitaries, in the name of End of Prophethood, is noteworthy. It facilitates mutual support in many ways.

The All Parties Namus Risalat Conference organized by the Aalami Majlis Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwwat (AMTKN) was indeed a big affair with all the right-wing top brass assembled in the Dreamland Hotel in Islamabad. It must have cost a fortune. Where do the finances come from? Are any accounts kept and audited? Could they also end up in wrong hands? Arguably under the fair umbrella of End of Prophethood, it is the Deobandi, Salafi and Wahabi national and international political agenda that is promoted.

**PM Azad Kashmir to act against Ahmadis to please mullas**

*Muzaffarabad:* The daily Dunya, Islamabad published the following story as Bureau Report on June 10, 2017:

_Ulama may rest content that the Shariah Court will be more powerful than before: Farooq Haider_  
_Immediate action will be taken against Qadianis' activities in Kotli: address in Ulama meeting_  

*Muzaffarabad (Bureau report):* Raja Farooq Haider Khan, the prime minister stated that the ulama should rest content that Sharia Court is being made more active and powerful. It will no longer be treated frivolously. Immediate action will be taken against Qadianis' activities in Kotli. Unlawful use of loudspeaker will not be accepted. Half-yearly payment to madrassahs shall be released. We shall allocate funds in future for construction of mosques and madrassahs. Imams and madrassa teachers will be confirmed in their posts, and their problems shall be solved. I greatly respect the senior ulama; they should contact me before issuing a statement against official actions. He stated all this in a high level meeting in the PM House, of the Movement for Protection of Madrassahs.

It would be recalled that the mischief of declaring Ahmadis ‘Non-Muslims’ was first initiated in the Azad Kashmir Assembly in 1972.

**Azad Kashmir (AJK) Assembly passes an unworthy resolution**

*Muzaffarabad; April 26, 2017:* AJK Assembly has done it again. First time it was in 1973 that this assembly took the initiative of passing a resolution recommending imposition of non-Muslim status on Ahmadis. This was then taken up by Mr. Z. A. Bhutto in Pakistan in that the grievous Amendment Nr II was made to the Constitution in 1974. This gave birth to anti-Ahmadi laws 10 years later in the form of Ordinance XX of General Zia, initiating a wave of persecution of the Ahmadi community that has brought embarrassment to the country in the comity of nations in addition to numerous other harms to the society and the state. It is now well-known that the above referred 1973/74 initiative had a foreign hand in it.

Forty-four years thereafter, the members of AJK assembly should have been wiser and realized the evil of such an initiative; instead they have proved that they are a legit progeny of their moronic political forefathers, and have come up with a unanimous proposal to outdo their 1973 performance.
On April 26, 2017 a resolution was moved by one Syed Ali Raza Bokhari of the ruling (PML-N) party. In preamble it referred to the Assembly’s 1973 resolution on the issue of End of Prophethood and the subsequent follow-up by the Pakistani state. The present resolution is worded in Urdu; it is lengthy and indulges in legal and religious jargon, so we reproduce here only its intent in plain paraphrased English ensuring nothing important is left out:

- Azad Jammu and Kashmir is an Islamic state, so it is duty bound to legislate in accordance with Quran and Sunnah… . All laws and rules on the issue of End of Prophethood are applicable in AJK but their effective implementation requires extremely appropriate steps by this honourable Assembly.
- Ahmadis should be registered as Non-Muslims and their Identity Cards should carry this fact. Those who do not comply should be punished as per law.
- Those Muslims who join Ahmadiyya should be designated apostates (Murtad) and be subjected to effective penal action. (Mullas insist that the Sharia penalty of ‘apostasy’ is death: Editor)
- Unislamic activities of Ahmadis should be closely monitored and effectively stopped; the administration should restrict, through police, the movement and activities of their clerics, and Ordinance XX should be vigorously implemented in letter and spirit. Permanent provisions should be made to automatically trigger regulations that impose restrictions on Ahmadis, while no relief will automatically ensue in their favour unless the AJK Assembly endorses it formally.
- This Assembly strongly condemns anti-Islam blasphemic postings on social media and requires that instructions and directions issued in Pakistan would effectively apply in Azad Jammu and Kashmir also.

Notes: 1) One wonders if the activists and protestors, across the border in Indian-administered Kashmir, are demanding the kind of Kashmiri state as resolved above by the AJK Assembly.

2) Mr. Farooq Haider Khan (PML-N) is the prime minister. Ch. Muhammad Yasin (PPP) is the leader of opposition and Mr. Shah Ghulam Qadir (PML-N) is the speaker of the Assembly in AJK. Sardar Masood Khan is the president of Azad Kashmir.

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-identify, 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, are more dangerous to the Islamic faith, than any other non-Muslim minority,” (The daily Din; Lahore, October 10, 2017), What a statement from a provincial minister, holding Law portfolio!

**Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi beats the retreat**

This year Mr. Mahershala Ali was awarded Oscar for ‘the best supporting-actor’.

He was then celebrated by many for being the first Muslim to win the coveted award. These included the official PTV and Ms. Lodhi, Pak ambassador to the United Nations.

Mr. Ali, a Muslim convert since 1999, joined the Ahmadiyya Community. This fact triggered a debate in the social media about his religious identity.

At this Ms. Lodhi deleted her tweet.

Saba Imtiaz tweeted: Pakistanis praising someone and the rolling it back cos they discover they’re Ahmadi is a fascinating genre of about-face-delete.

Kashif Chaudhri, a well-known American blogger posted on his Facebook account: “The deletion of her tweet by Maleeha Lodhi shows, that even courageous people like her cannot ignore anti-Ahmadi emotional and social attitudes; this reflects the situation faced by Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan.” Translated from a release of Voice of Germany

**Policy statement by the Prime Minister**

*Karachi; March 15, 2017:* PM Nawaz Sharif made a speech in Karachi at Hindu festival of Holi. The daily Dawn of March 15, 2017 reported this speech. It deserves a place on record –

(extracts):

KARACHI: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said the people of all faiths enjoy equal rights under the Constitution and no one will be allowed to create religious disharmony and instability in the country.

“Islam is a religion of peace, love and humanity, which teaches respect for all religions. There is no religious dispute in Pakistan,” he said, adding that the only tussle going on was between the good and the evil, the progressive and the retrogressive elements.

... Extending greetings to the Hindu community on their religious festival, the prime minister said his government was committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all communities as it stood for complete religious freedom and equal rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The government would enact more stringent laws to protect minorities and curb crimes against them, he added.
He said Holi was a festival of colours which gave the message of love and peace. Diversity of religions and faiths was a vital ingredient for unity and all communities would have to transform this element to further foster the bonds of brotherhood and affection, he added.

...

He said that some elements had tried to weaken Pakistan by misusing religious differences or distorting history, but the nation had rejected such attempts. The elements trying to create fissures in society on the basis of religion had no place among the people, he said, adding that no one would be allowed to hinder the path of religious tolerance and unity as well as progress of the country.

He said Pakistan was created on the basis of equal rights to all communities and the government would protect all mosques, churches, temples and other places of worship.

The above is a commendable policy statement that echoes somewhat the off-quoted views of the Quaid i Azam in his historic speech in the Legislative Assembly on 11 August 1947. However, this raises the following pertinent questions:

1. Why did the Punjab Government mount a CTD raid on Ahmadiyya central offices on December 5, 2016, while the authorities, the CTD and even the mullas know that Ahmadiyya Community has never indulged in terrorist activities? Also, if a mistake was committed by the CTD and its keepers, why the prosecution under this fake case was pursued and the two detained accused were not released on bail?
2. Why was 80-years old Ahmadi book-seller Mr. Abdul Shakoor arrested by the CTD personnel in Rabwah for selling Ahmadiyya publications, and his release was not being pursued by his tormentors and prosecutors?
3. Why did the Punjab Government comply with condemnable recommendations of its Ulama Board, and banned Ahmadiyya publications of scriptural status, as also all of the community’s periodicals, thus violating constitutional guarantees as also the policy guidelines of the federal government, given above?
4. Why is the Dulmial Ahmadiyya mosque still officially locked, as demanded by the criminal mob who attacked it on December 12, 2016?

The federating units of Pakistan must honour the guidelines given by the founding father and also the public policy given by the PM of the Federal Government in consonance with the Constitution and the International conventions signed by the Pakistani state.

**Press reports on Mr. Asad Qaisar, Speaker KP Assembly**

**Peshawar:** Last year on October 28, 2016 the daily Islam published the following story, (extracts):

“KP: Decision taken to include End of Prophethood subject in syllabi. Instruction issued to move on priority basis, in the light of recommendations of the Ulama.”
A high level meeting was held on Tuesday in the Assembly Secretariat under the chairmanship of Mr. Asad Qaisar, the Speaker of KPK Provincial Assembly to formally include Khatme Nabuwat (KN) in syllabi....

Mr. Asad Qaisar, the Speaker directed the officials to take actions on priority basis on the recommendations of Ulama Karam on this issue of including the End of Prophethood in syllabi and submit an early report.

The Speaker thanked the ulama in providing guidance and making recommendations to the government on this important and essential change to school syllabus.

Earlier Mr. Qaisar (of PTI) had attended a KN conference in Mardan KPK and told the audience that “Lovers of the Prophet (Aashiqaan Rasul) will liquidate all the conspiracies devised by Qadianis (Ahmadis). As per constitution, the deniers of Khatme Nabuwwat are outside the pale of Islam, and soon the KPK government would make End of Prophethood part of school syllabus.”

As a result End of Prophethood was made a part of school syllabus in KPK. Everyone knows that mullas and sectarian elements always bank upon this dogma to agitate the minds of common Muslims including youth and children.

Press reports divulged that Mr. Qaisar could have reasons to press on this issue, other than the love of End of Prophethood against the Ahmadi community.

The prestigious daily Dawn published the following report on March 19, 2017 (extracts):

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa speaker denies corruption charges**

Islamabad: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly speaker Asad Qaisar on Saturday categorically denied allegations that he owned a house worth Rs 350 million and was involved in misuse of power.

The presser was held following media reports that the NAB KP director, in a letter, had sought permission from the NAB chief to initiate an inquiry against Mr. Qaisar over charges of corruption and misuse of power.

Media reports claimed that Mr. Qaisar, while declaring his assets, had claimed that he shared a 14-marla house with his brother. Now, it was reported that he owned a 35 Kanal house worth Rs. 350 million in Banigala, Islamabad.

The next day the Dawn published the following report:

**“MPA asks Imran to expel Asad Qaiser from Party”**

**Bureau Report**

**Peshawar.** Former provincial minister of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf Ziaullah Afridi has demanded of PTI chairman Imran Khan to expel Khyber Pakhtun Khwa Assembly Speaker from the party and keep him out unless he is exonerated by a court from the corruption allegations....

Accompanied by scores of PTI workers, the MPA said that the reports about Mr. Qaisar’s land properties and appointments made by him had enough substance for the party chairman to sack him otherwise no one would accept the PTI chief’s tall claims about merit....

The MPA demanded a thorough probe into the allegations against Mr. Qaisar...." Some people are of the firm opinion that the louder a politician speaks on pious themes and religious dogma, the higher is the probability of his involvement in dishonourable pursuits.
Politics of religion

April 2017: The role of religion and the Ulama is significant and rife in Pakistan. It has a history that is older than the birth of this Islamic republic. The present condition of the state of Pakistan is the direct result, at least partly, of this role. Its future in the same way is linked to the vision and actions of the Ulama who are deeply involved in politics. The centenary celebrations in KPK, of JUI (Fazl ur Rahman) on 7-9 April along with the proceedings of the Namus Risalat (honour of the Prophet) conference held on February 1 in Islamabad where Maulana Rahman assumed its leading role provide a clear window of overview of this phenomenon.

JUI is a successor of the Jamiat Ulama Hind (JUH) that came into being in 1919. JUH’s members, as also leadership, comprised primarily men of Muslims of Deoband school, originally a reformist group that soon turned to politics. They even issued a fatwa that, “It is Haram (unlawful as per Sharia) for a Muslim to be a member of the Muslim League.” During the Raj, this party reckoned that it was no use rising in armed revolt against the British, so it co-operated with the Congress to attain freedom. By early 1940s, Indian Muslims generally rejected the political leadership of JUH, and supported Muslim League – as a result Pakistan came into being.

In Pakistan, NWFP (now KPK) to be specific, JUI was led by Mufti Mahmud, the father of Maulana Fazl ur Rahman. It wielded political clout in the province and on account of its Deoband appeal, controlled a fair share of mosques and madrassahs in other provinces of Pakistan. With the passage of time, and its emphasis on politics in the society, the JUI’s reformist role dwindled, and it represented ultra right-wing Islamist politics in the land. This helped it maintain its political leverage but it played a major role in radicalizing the society. It developed internal feuds, splitting into JUI (F) and JUI (S), the former claiming the lead role. Islamization of the society by General Zia, assisted by Islamist political parties, led to radicalization which in turn ripened into extremism that subsequently bred terrorism. The JUI had to perform a difficult balancing act to synchronize its politics with the rise and subsequent rejection of terrorism by the state and the society. Till recently Maulana Rahman was publicly sympathetic to the cause of the Mujahedeen, then to the Taliban etc on both sides of the Durand Line; however since the attack on APS in Peshawar, terrorism has earned disgrace in society, so the Maulana has artfully changed his rhetoric to suit the times. His actions however betray no change in practice. The two events, the celebrations in April and the ‘APC’ on February 1 are ample proof of this dichotomy or plain hypocrisy. We elaborate.

The centenary celebrations were designed to show a fair face of the JUI. Even non-Muslim religious leaders were invited to the event. Leaders of PPP and PML-N were asked to address the participants. The Imam Ka’aba and the Saudi minister of religious affairs were invited, as also the Deoband leadership from India. The JUI leadership said the right things to impress all present; for example:
- Muslims, the world over, are wrongly linked to terrorism, violence and intolerance.
- It is a conspiracy to accuse Deoband of militancy and conflict, as this group is committed to democracy, peace and minorities’ rights.
Spiritual progeny of Sheikh ul Hind (Mahmud ul Hassan) follow his philosophy of peace worldwide.

Local and foreign evil lobbies accuse madrassahs of militancy while these citadels of Islam only protect the Faith.

Unity and mutual tolerance are a dire need of present times and we must achieve these despite our differences.

Religion and faith are integral to politics in Pakistan, and liberals and seculars indulge in wishful thinking to break this link.

All religious political parties should form a joint front. To that end, Siraj-ul-Haq, the JI Amir gave a free hand to Maulana Rahman.

Précis from the daily Islam “Aalami Ijtema”, April 17, 2017

Whatever the merit or worth of the above proclamations, let’s now recollect the statements and actions of the same leading Maulana and his colleagues in the All Parties Namus Risalat Conference held a few weeks earlier on February 1, 2017 in the Dreamland Hotel of Islamabad.

Those who attended this conference included Fazlur Rahman (JUI), Samiul Haq (JUI-S), Siraj ul Haq (JI), Zafarul Haq (PML-N), Fazlur Rehman Khalil (Ansar ul Ummah), Abdul Khair Zubair (JUP), Kafil Bokhari (Ahrar Islam), Tariq Cheema (PML-Q), Ejaz ul Haq (ML-Zia) etc. Only mulla Allah Wasaya, a cleric of the KN, was present to represent the sponsors. Apparently the stage was handed over to politico-religious leadership to sell their ware in the name of Honour of the Prophet and the End of Prophethood. The ‘church’ and the ‘state’ came out, hand in hand, to exploit each other to the full. The proceedings reported in the press made that very clear.

Maulvi Fazl ur Rahman of JUI-F was given the lead role and he read out ‘the Declaration’. In this he started off with telling the authorities not to meddle with the blasphemy law 295-C, but then quickly fired all his broadsides on Ahmadiyya targets. He demanded, inter alia:

- Qadiani (TV) channels should be banned for their anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan transmissions.
- The decision to change the name of the QA University’s Centre for Physics to Dr Abdul Salam Qadiani should be withdrawn.
- Innocent accused Muslims of Dulmial (riot) should be released and action should be taken against officials who were partial against the wronged (Mazloom) Muslims.
- Desist from returning to Qadianis the educational institutions nationalized in the days of Bhutto, etc.

The Conference, having made these demands, conveyed that these were not empty words to be soon forgotten, but would be pursued with further action if they were not implemented within deadline of one month. A 15-memebr committee was formed to plan and implement future course of action. The committee comprised leaders of the participating parties as members, while Maulana Fazal ur Rahman would head the committee.
Following opinions were aired in the conference and reported in the vernacular press (for instance the dailies Ausaf and Islam of February 2, 2017):

- Trump has come out openly against Muslims. There is need to unite against him.
- The government proceeds to hang Mumtaz Qadri overnight, but fails to implement court’s verdict on Aasia Masih.
- Police cases should be registered against bloggers.
- The disbelievers (Kafirs) have given the name ‘terrorism’ to Jihad.
- We may have our differences with Hafiz Saeed but the government’s treatment of him is not appropriate. We are all one on religious issues.
- Qadianis have dug in abroad against Pakistan. They have never been deprived of basic rights here.
- An APC should be called on Chakwal (Ahmadiyya mosque) issue to raise voice in support of wronged Muslims.
- Foreign powers attempt to change (school) syllabi; we’ll have to play our role.
- ‘End of Prophethood’ day should be celebrated every year officially.
- Religious and political parties should jointly resist international pressure.
- We respect the PM, but any violation of Sharia restrictions is not licit. If the Ulama head for Islamabad, all (past) sit-ins would be blurred.
- Religious parties should launch the Nizam Mustafa campaign.
- Any effort to change the blasphemy law will result in violent chaos (fasaad).
- Qadianis are active against the country.

Comparison of what was said in April with what was undertaken on February 1 is interesting, to say the least. It appears that Maulana Fazl ur Rahman has found it convenient to gloss over the Quranic injection: “O ye who believe, why do say what you do not? It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not.” (61: 2/3–3/4)

**JUI (S) takes pre-emptive action to keep Pakistan Islamist**

**Islamabad; August 21, 2017:** Maulvi Sami ul Haq of madrassah Akora Khattak issued an invitation for an All Parties Conference to be held in an Islamabad hotel to deliberate upon the likelihood of repeal or amendment to various so-called Islamic provisions of the Constitution and the law.

As per his invitation letter, “After the disqualification of the former Prime Minister, Art. 62 and 63 of the Constitution are under discussion and various quarters are taking interest in their repeal. It is not a question of only two articles; fifteen years efforts, 1970 - 1985, have gone into making the Constitution Islamic. These amendments are not acceptable to the Western, Jewish and Qadiani lobbies, as also to the liberal and secular sections of the country. They would like to open the door of amendments to important clauses like the Blasphemy law, Anti-Qadiani laws, Hadd Ordinance, shifting of the Objectives Resolution in the Constitution proper from its preamble, Separate Electorates, Sharia Court, CII’s clear
directions to undo ‘interest’, and limiting the powers of the Supreme Court and other courts in corruption cases, etc….”

Maulana Sami-ul-Haq called the meeting of leading figures of all political and religious parties and groups at 14:30 on August 28, 2017.

It is relevant to mention that this cleric heads the madrassah in Akora Khattak, which was granted Rs. 300 million as aid by the KPK government of Imran Khan’s PTI, not long ago.

Update: The meeting was held on August 28, as planned. As per press report a number of religious parties’ representatives attended – Sh Rashid Ahmad of Lal Haveli was there as well. Jamaat Islami’s Siraj ul Haq also addressed the meeting. International political situation relevant to Pakistan–Afghanistan was discussed at par with the agenda for which the meeting was called.

The government to celebrate 2018 as the Khatme Nabuwwat Year
Islamabad; December 4, 2017: The daily Qudrat, Islamabad published the following story: A fabulous plan by the government for End of Prophethood. The entire next year shall be specific to the cognizance of Khatme Nabuwwat. What the government will do – shall be a good news for Muslims.

Islamabad (The daily Qudrat; December 04, 2017): Important declaration by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Year 2018 shall be celebrated as Cognizance (shu’ure) of Khatme Nabuwwat.

The Ministry will hold celebrations, seminars and conferences on the issues of protection of the end of prophethood and its honour (Namus Risalat).

On this issue all efforts will be made, through speeches and writings. The next year, the theme of the Worldwide Seerat Conference on 12 Rabiul Awwal shall be Khatme Nabuwwat Conference. It will be proposed that the writers write papers on the subject of End of Prophethood.

We hold our comments.

Bigotry pervades in Azad Kashmir government
Muzaffarabad; December 14, 2017: The daily Ausaf reported at length some ‘resolution’ passed by the AJK cabinet. Extracts of this report are translated below; these betray the mindset of the current day rulers of this territory:

Protection of End of Prophethood and Rejection of Qadianiyat will be added to the Interim Constitution Act. Ethnic cleansing of Kashmiris condemned; appointment of Indian negotiator rejected; Kashmir and Palestine deserve attention of the world community….

Muzaffarabad (Staff Reporter): Among the resolutions passed in the cabinet meeting of Azad Kashmir, in one of these the members of the Assembly were gratefully thanked who, in 1973, voted in favour of the Resolution regarding the End of the Prophethood and Rejection of Qadianiyat (Radde Qadianiat), thereby earning the honour of passage of that Resolution. The role of Major ® Muhammad Ayub, Member of the Assembly is particularly laudable in moving and steering that resolution…The members further endorsed that the acts and articles contained in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan will be incorporated, word by word, in the AJK Interim Constitution Act 1974 and other relevant laws. …

Already the AJK cabinet has approved appointment of a 5-member committee headed by the law minister to propose inclusion word-by-word of Pakistani laws regarding end of prophethood, in Azad Kashmir. …

The cabinet meeting was held in the Prime Minister’s Secretariat under the chairmanship of AJK Prime Minister Mr. Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan. …
It is noteworthy that while inviting the attention of the whole world to the plight of Kashmiris, the AJK cabinet unabashedly passes resolutions to deny Freedom of Religion and Human Rights to Kashmiri Ahmadis living in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Rather than learning a lesson from the experience of Pakistan, these headmen declare openly that they intend not only repeating others’ mistakes, they propose the same for the rest of Kashmir they invite to merge.

**Anti-Ahmadiyya pamphlet endorsed by Chairman Ulama Board Punjab circulated**

_Faisalabad; December 2017:_  Ahmadi businessmen in Faisalabad, Sialkot, Islamabad and other cities received an Anti-Ahmadiyya pamphlet titled: _An invitation to Qadianis to recant_. It is authored by Maulvi Muhibullah of Khanqa Sirajia Saadia Nakshbandia, Loralai, Balochistan. Abusive language is used in it against the founder of the Ahmadiyya community. An endorsement letter from Maulvi Fazal Raheem Ashrafi, the chairman of Muttahida Ulama Board of Punjab government is added to it, which declares it fulfillment of an obligation on behalf of all the major institutions of Pakistan. Thus the chairman, who gets his allowances and perks from public funds, has made the government a party to fanning fires of religious extremism and hatred, in gross violation of the National Action Plan.

**Curses all over**

It seems that Ahmadi-bashers enjoy using abusive language against Ahmadis and their leaders. They avail of the permissive attitude of the authorities and indulge in foul jibes against Ahmadi holy personages. These half-wits and their elders do not realise that this exercise only exposes the perpetrators rather than their targets.

Below we print two photos of curses spray-painted on a door and on foot-steps. These target the holy founder of Ahmadiyyat.
The above reflects on authorities who take no legal action against these miscreants. The law (PPC 295-A) prescribes 10 years’ imprisonment for those who indulge in “deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.”

**A well-considered discrimination!**

**July 9, 2017:** The Government of Sindh got published a half-page ad, in colour in various newspapers including the daily Jang, Lahore of July 9, 2017, paid from public funds; it carried a message of felicitations to the Aga Khan IV, under the following headline:

*A deeply felt hearty message of felicitations on the Diamond Jubilee of the Imamate of the 49th hereditary and familial Imam Prince Shah Karim ul Hussaini Agha Khan of the Shia Imamia Ismaili Muslims.*

A colour picture of the Aga Khan adores a quarter of the page of the newspaper. Three pictures, although smaller in size, of Messers Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto and Murad Ali Shah are pasted in line above the headline.

A statement of gratefulness for the Aga Khan’s tireless services to the country is made in the text of the ad.

Ahmadis appreciate the Government of Sindh’s public support to the Ismaili community in the face of mullah’s insistence that Ismailis are non-Muslims, perhaps more so than the ‘Qadianis’.

Ahmadis, however, also wish that the government’s courageous treatment of minority communities were more even-handed. Many Ahmadis have been murdered for their faith in
Karachi, and the mulls of Khatme Nabuwwat are free to declare them *Wajib-ul-Qatl* (must be killed) in the open. Also, the authorities may like to look up their records and see if they have permitted construction of even one house of worship for Ahmadis in Sindh province in the last three decades.

**An improved National Narrative under consideration**

*Islamabad; December 18, 2017:* The daily DUNYA of Faisalabad reported at some length the news of a fresh ‘National Narrative’ under consideration of the government of Pakistan, the Interior Ministry. The daily claimed that it has obtained a document, drafted by MACNA that is tasked to fight terrorism, now attached to the Ministry of Interior. This narrative is expected to be implemented after approval by the prime minister.

The draft of National Narrative includes the following provisions, *inter alia:*

- Only the state has the authority to declare Jihad or war.
- No person or group is allowed to declare Pakistan ‘*Darul Harb*’ (Abode of war) or an unislamic state and declare the armed forces, security organizations or the people as *Kafir* (unbelievers) or *Murtad* (apostate).
- Private militias and armed groups are not allowed in the country.
- Protection of minorities is state responsibility.
- Official documents like passport, identity cards etc will not carry a mention of religion, in order to promote national cohesion.
- Fundamentalism is not restricted to only armed and extremist groups, it is widespread.
- No parallel institutions, in fighting nor in education, shall be permitted.
- Respect for others’ views should be promoted and hate speech shall be stopped.
- Muslims are expected to be moderate and not extremist in mutual dealings and in dealing with others.
- Violence in the name of religion should be strongly condemned.
- Pakistan shall be made a modern, progressive and peaceful state, a model for the Ummah, where there shall be no room for violence on the basis of belief, sect, caste, colour or ethnicity.
- Some extremists misquote the Quran to declare other Muslims as *Kafir* and *Wajib-ul-Qatl*…; this shall not be allowed.
- Only a special committee will approve registration of blasphemy cases by the police; the committee shall comprise representatives of LEAs, MNAs, MPAs, reputed clerics, and minority representatives if the accused is a member of a minority group.
- None will be allowed to take law in his hand and those preaching violence and indulging in false accusation will be severely dealt with and fined.
- Madrassas promoting violence and hate will be shut down and the proprietors held accountable without discrimination.
• No madrassah shall be allowed to avail foreign funds, without permission, etc, etc.

We have two comments on the above Draft Narrative:

1. It is apparent that the authorities are now well aware of the nature and causes of terrorism and extremism. They know the remedial steps as well. But, is there enough will and strength in the various institutions of the state to undertake all that is required, in a selfless and committed manner?

2. Our past experience is not encouraging in this field; for instance:
   a. A Supreme Court bench, headed by Chief Justice Jillani came up with similar conclusions and judgment on June 19, 2014 that was called landmark, game changer, historical, etc. It dealt extensively with the issue of minorities. Their lordships provided even a set of directives to implement their verdict. Almost nothing was undertaken on the ground thereafter.
   b. Six months later, extremists attacked Army Public School in Peshawar and killed 134 school children. This outrage gave birth to National Action Plan (NAP that was produced by consensus of all the major state stake-holders). The 20 points of the plan were not honoured by most of the authorities. (On the other hand, the Govt of Punjab banned the entire written works of the founder of the Ahmadiyyat, and raided the only book shop in Rabwah.) Six months after the announcement of the NAP, a Supreme Court judge observed in court, “There is hardly any progress in implementation of the NAP.”

So, any forecast for the effectiveness of the National Narrative is a hazardous undertaking.
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...