

**Sealing of still another Ahmadiyya mosque after an attack by a hostile mob  
Riot took place due ineffective official intervention. Led to flight of the entire  
Ahmadi community from their village. 2 deaths in the incident.**

**A massacre averted through firm official action *after* the miscreants'  
occupation and arson in the mosque**

*The mob attack on the Ahmadiyya mosque in District Chakwal was another major event in the highly deplorable history of defiling Ahmadiyya places of worship in Pakistan, that has reached unbelievable figures in the past three decades. It is surprising that a state and society can tolerate all that in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. The attack on the mosque was mounted by the mullas after prior warning to the authorities. The latter knew the date and time of the assembly of the crowd. Despite that, they used no tear gas, no water hoses, nothing to deter the procession from deviating off the authorized route. Ahmadis, though less than 5% of the attackers, had assembled to defend their mosque. It is sheer luck and coincidence that the event did not end up as a massacre, despite shoddy and cursory attitude of the authorities.*

*The mosque was sealed, nevertheless. Ahmadis have no place to worship. That is what the mulla desired in the first instance. The authorities have delivered that.*

***Dulmial, District Chakwal, Punjab; December 2016:***

A hostile procession taken out on the felicitous occasion of the birthday of the Holy Prophet on 12 December 2016 altered its authorized route and went for the Ahmadiyya mosque in the village with declared intention to occupy it. A major clash at the site was avoided through police intervention however the miscreants succeeded in occupying the mosque and then setting its furnishings etc. on fire in police presence. Eventually Rangers and army units had to be deployed to restore peace. The authorities decided to seal the Ahmadiyya mosque. Two persons, one Ahmadi and one non-Ahmadi died in the event. Essential details follow.

This mosque was originally built in 1860. In those days there were no Ahmadis and no Non-Ahmadis, as Ahmadiyya Movement did not come into being till near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declared his divine mission, a number of influential, literate and land-owning elders of this village accepted his claim and became members



of the Ahmadiyya denomination. They maintained their ownership, control and care of this mosque. There was no objection to non-Ahmadis praying there as communal tolerance prevailed in plenty. Later Non-Ahmadis built their own mosques; there are now ten of these. Land for some of these was provided *gratis* by Ahmadis as a sign of good-will and service to God.

The control of the Ahmadiyya mosque was not exercised by non-Ahmadis ever. Even after 1974, when Ahmadis were declared Not-Muslims in the constitution, the other Muslims raised no objection to Ahmadis' mosque – it was their place of worship. Decades later, in 1997, Non-Ahmadis approached the courts to claim its ownership; however, having no case, they could make no headway with their demand in the Lahore High Court. So they stopped pursuing the case. It was revived among the public only a few weeks ago by local mullas and by a mulla based in Canada, Malik Rashid Ahmad who had enough time, money and motivation to make big mischief, as Pakistan is amply susceptible to religious extremism and sectarianism. Assistance of Islamist organizations like Khatme Nabuwwat, Tehrik-i-Labaik Ya Rasool ul Allah, Tajdar Khatme Nabuwwat etc was readily available.

In a Friday congregation, the leading visiting mulla at the local mosque Lal Shah incited the worshippers to violence and their commitment to forcibly take over the Ahmadiyya mosque on the birthday of the Holy Prophet. He asked them to respond to his call by standing up. Ahmadis learnt of their plans and informed the district administration of this, requesting security measures to protect the life and properties and worship places of Ahmadiyya Community. This letter was written on December 5, 2016, one week before the happening. Its copy was sent to the chief minister of Punjab.

Ahmadi-bashers made no effort to hide their intentions. They too sent a letter to the DCO, with copies to 10 authorities from the President of Pakistan down to the Punjab Home Minister. The letter spread over 27 pages, carried endorsement of 580 individuals (as claimed) but primarily of Sibte ul Hasan, Muhammad Hussain, Tauqir ul Hasan, Malik Rashid Ahmad and Mueed Shah. The letter plainly demanded help in “freeing the mosque, safeguarding the joint interest of Muslims, from the grip of *Kufr*; otherwise we might be forced into taking the most extreme action to restore the great sanctity of this mosque.”

It appears that the district authorities did little in response to this serious threat except calling some mullas and accepting their assurance that the intended procession will go by the authorized route and will not turn to the Ahmadiyya mosque. On December 12, the police presence was augmented slightly to approximately 2 dozen – entirely inadequate to handle an extremist mob of more than a thousand. The police later told the press that the participants numbered 2800 to 3000.

On 12 December the procession made a forced alteration to its authorized route and headed for the Ahmadiyya mosque, in violation of the commitment given by their leaders to the district administration. Arguably the commitment given was meant to be broken. Ahmadis had foreseen this possibility and a few dozen of them had assembled in their mosque to defend it against the threatened occupation. The processionists were armed. On arrival at the gate of the mosque they indulged in extensive firing, stone throwing and slogan raising. Ahmadis resisted the entry of the mob.

The small contingent of police was present and in contact with the two parties. The siege went on for hours. One Ahmadi defender, a senior citizen, died of cardiac arrest on account of the stress of the happenings. Senior police and district administration officials had arrived by then at the scene. The police eventually persuaded Ahmadis to depart from a back door, and guaranteed safety of the mosque and made the promise that the rioters would not be allowed to take its possession. However, immediately after the Ahmadis left, the mob stormed in and the police did little to stop them. Once inside, they defiled the mosque, piled up its sacred scriptures, furniture, carpets etc. and set them on fire.

Then came the Rangers, even Army units. The miscreants fled. The mosque was sealed by the authorities.

During the siege, one of the processionists was hit by a shot, he died subsequently. In a previous report we mentioned that Ahmadis insist they did not kill him; now we know better that

the senior Ahmadis did not have the time and opportunity to interview all the Ahmadi defenders, so who shot at him will have to be assessed through professional investigation.

The police registered one (not two) FIR against the rioters as also against Ahmadis; it was entered in the name of local SHO. Its wording is not far from what happened. It is registered as Nr. 214/16 in P.S. Choa Saidan Shah on December 12, 2016 under PPCs 302/324, 153A/186, 353/295, 295-A/436, 148/149, 147 and 7ATA. It names 36 non-Ahmadis and 36 Ahmadis. The numbers seem to imply a balanced approach. However, how a few defenders of their own property, a place of worship, could be treated at par with a violent mob assembled at the targeted site, with commitment to occupy the place. A simple mathematical calculation will show that while 60% of the defenders have been named in the FIR, the aggressors number a little more than 1 percent.

After the riot, the situation was very tense in the village. Ahmadis felt very unsafe. They left with their families for safe locations, to wait for the situation to become clearer. However, such a flight is a very severe hardship in village life.

The ‘tweet’ made by the provincial government during the riot is worth quoting. “Punjab Home Department is following up Chakwal incident. The local admin and police are at the spot and handling the situation. As per details, a misunderstanding developed between the two groups. The police and administration are making all out efforts to resolve the issue amicably,” they wrote. To call the pre-planned assault undertaken by a mob comprising thousands ‘a misunderstanding’ is indeed cool – to a low degree. The tweeted amicable resolution resulted in sealing the Ahmadiyya mosque and flight of the entire Ahmadiyya community from the village – tyranny of the majority!

A day after the mob stoned the Ahmadiyya mosque, Rana Sanaullah, the provincial minister appeared on program Newswise on Dawn TV and made some quotable remarks:

- At present, everything is under control there (in Dulmial). Majority of people there are peaceful. There was no sectarian tension there, however... .
- Responsible officials had got the issue resolved through mutual consultation; they (mullas) had assured (us) that they will not undertake any such action at the time of the rally... .
- (Ahmadi) guards at the scene should not have hurried to react; the police were there. ... Had the guards not opened fire, the police would have negotiated an understanding and the procession would have passed, as it always did in the past (sic).
- See how we defend them (Ahmadis). We saved these people in Jhelum too. I am sorry to notice Ahmadis’ campaign in the social media. If you do that, you are fanning the fire that we want to curb. You expose it further.....Don’t do that....I reassure them that they should entertain no fear.

(Note: Ahmadis’ experience in Lahore, Jhelum, Gujranwala, Chak Sikandar, Jhando Sahi, Tando Allah Yar, etc was quite different to what Minister Rana suggested.)

At present four Ahmadis are under arrest. They are Malik Riaz Ahmad, Mr. Muhammad Anwar, Mr. Naveed Ahmad and Mr. Khurram Akbar. By the end of the month 68 Ahmadis including women and children had gone back to home.

In a recent report in the daily Dawn, Chairman National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR) Justice (r) Ali Nawaz Chohan informed the Senate Committee that the key culprit behind the incident was Abdul Rasheed (sic); accused (Rasheed) had a history of propagating extremism and creating troubles in the name of religion; the chairman NCHR said Rasheed had absconded from the scene and was still at large; We (NCHR) blame the police and the administration for failing to stop the act of violence; the senators blamed the police and the administration for the failure to prevent the act of arson,...Senator Nisar Khan said there had been reports on social media that the police did not act to prevent the violence which continued for around five hours; the (Senate) Committee decided to write to the Punjab government to pay compensation to the victims. (Dawn, January 3, 2017)

The Punjab government has reportedly asked the federal government to put Rasheed and Hafeez ur Rehman, the leaders of miscreants on the Exit Control List.

It is also relevant to mention that an overwhelming majority of the miscreants in the procession came from adjoining villages. The one who died that day was also not a local resident.

The Punjab government has formed a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to investigate and report on the incident. It is headed by an I.G. Police and its members are officials from police and other security agencies.

Meanwhile, some religious leaders like Dr Ashraf Asif Jalali and Pir Afzal Qadri of Tehrik-i-Labaik Ya Rasoolullah, Mulla Khadim Hussain Rizvi of Tajdar Khatme Nabuwat and the leaderships of Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwat issued a call for observing the next Friday, 16 December as a 'Day of Protests', deliver sermons in mosques on the issue, take out processions etc. In fact it was recipe for countrywide unrest. It was announced that 'two Muslims had been killed by Qadianis, while not a single Qadiani got a bruise.' The government did not wish the agitation to grow, and issued orders to the administration and police to restrict the mullas effectively. This was done and there were no mentionable incidents, proving that the authorities can be effective if they decide to be so.

The news of this vicious assault on a house of worship spread fast worldwide. The UN Country Team expressed its shock at the brutality of this mob attack on Ahmadi place of worship in Chakwal. The New York Times gave it the headline: **Pakistanis attack mosque of religious minority**. Lantos Foundation in Washington and England-based International Human Rights Committee jointly condemned the attack on Chakwal mosque as also the police raid on Ahmadiyya headquarters in Pakistan. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan issued a wholesome staff report on December 15 expressing grave concern over the treatment being meted out to Ahmadi citizens both at the hands of those tasked with security as well as the zealots. The commission said that it was hugely distressing that the police were not able to protect the worship place. 'Both incidents constitute a failure on part of the authorities to ensure protection of citizens' rights enshrined in the Constitution and under international human rights law,' it said. The Commission demanded a probe to determine "what could have led to a conclusion that would not have deprived the Ahmadis of one more of their place of worship."

The local, national and international press reported the loathsome attack, and made editorial comments. The Associated Press reported, “The mob hurled stones and bricks at the mosque before storming the building, said Mahmood Javed Bhatti, Deputy Commissioners of the Chakwal district outside Islamabad, adding that gunmen opened fire on Ahmadis during the melee.” The weekly Newsweek Pakistan issued its report under the forthright headline **‘Islamabad has a shameful habit of forgetting its past’**. The weekly concluded its report by comment that, Ahmadis –‘manufactured’ as a minority in 1974 – are not Pakistan’s only embattled minority community. Christians too are attacked routinely, resulting in deaths and loss of property, as in 2009 at Gojra and in 2013 and 2014 across Pakistan while the state concocted ways of forgetting that it was moving towards its terminal crises.’

The dailies The Express Tribune, The Nation, The News made apt editorial comments on this monstrous and unsupportable assault on a place of worship. The daily Dawn undertook detailed credible reporting of the incident, prepared by its local correspondent in Chakwal.

The local weekly Asaar, published from Chakwal, Chief Editor Yunus Awan, candidly, truthfully and boldly reported the incident in the following bold headlines on December 15, 2016:

**Assault on Qadianis’ place of worship in Dulmial. 2 dead, ...**

**Some participants of the 12 Rabi ul Awal procession deviated from the authorized route and headed for Qadianis’ worship place.**

**They shouted slogans vigorously; broke open the gate and entered; threw out the furnishings and books and set them on fire.**

**Those inside the worship place saved their lives by escaping from back door. The furious mob persisted in rioting and kept shouting loud slogans.**

**During the rioting, Khalid son of Ayub died of cardiac arrest in the worship place while Naeem Shafiq was shot dead.**

**The administration called the Rangers and the Army. The angry mob was driven out of worship place which was then sealed. Funeral rites of Naeem Shafiq were performed on Tuesday.**

*Weekly Asar, Chakwal, December 15, 2016*

The weekly offered the following opinionstoo in bold headlines:

**The DCO and DPO are responsible for the tragedy in Dulmial**

**The state is duty bound to protect lives and properties of its citizens. The DCO and the DPO failed to take action on the two parties’ representations.**

**The DCO and the DPO displayed routine lethargy and took no effective action despite the prevailing tension.**

**The DCO and DPO are also accountable to someone. Those responsible should be punished after due inquiry.**

Kunwar Khuldun Shahid, a renowned op-ed writer wrote on December 15 a hard hitting readable article for the blog ‘The diplomat’ and gave it the title of his concluding recommendation: **To win its war on terror, Pakistan must accept Ahmadis as Muslims.**

Shan Taseer, worthy son of a worthy father, martyred Governor Salman Taseer, wrote, fit for archives, an article in Urdu, for [www.humsub](http://www.humsub); extracts:

“...Tomorrow, if India’s parliament, through a unanimous act, declares, 250 million Indian Muslims to be Non-Muslims, and then persecutes them, and the world raises the issue, would it be disregarded declaring it to be India’s internal problem.”...

“Through this (Second Amendment) that is unconstitutional, non-political and inhuman, Pakistan has become the only country in the world, to use the democratic tool to deliver its people from the bondage of imperialism and dictators and passed them to the bloody claws of Mullatism. This bondage is more disappointing and dangerous as it derives the justification for its tyranny and brutality from religion. Through such legislation we have handed over a gun to a monkey, while we seem satisfied that he will shoot only Ahmadi or Shia citizens.

Fellows... he’ll shoot anyone. For God’s sake, take the gun back from this monkey, otherwise even your future generations are not safe.

*<http://www.humsuh.com.pk/36737/shan-taseer>*

In the meantime the mulla did not rest on his oars. He availed of the vernacular press and the electronic media to justify his excesses and consolidate his success. In this effort, he, as always, distorted the truth and indulged in vicious rhetoric. He conveyed to the common man, *inter alia*;

- Ahmadis posted their men; this incited the processionists.
- Qadianis took away a Muslim, killed him and threw away his dead body.
- Two Muslims were killed.
- Qadianis are committed to spread disorder and provocation in Pakistan.
- Qadiani bureaucrats are playing a dangerous game to derail CPEC.

*Issued by Action Committee Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwwat (Pakistan)*

From an op-ed in a vernacular daily:

- It was the Qadianis who attacked the Holy Birthday procession.
- In Dulmial Qadianis abducted a Muslim youth and killed him.
- There are many mosques in the Punjab that are under the Qadiani grip (*Qabza*) and their aggressive posture can lead to a massacre.
- The Dulmial mosque, Qadianis had converted it into a Dur uz Zikr, and they even switched on Qadiani TV transmissions therein.
- Muslims appealed to the president and the prime Minister to hand over this mosque to Muslims, or it should be sealed in the first instance, but none took any notice.
- Muslims did not set fire to mosque, they only took out Qadianis’ apostatical literature, dish antenna, TV, and other furnishings and set these on fire. They took possession of the mosque and thereafter offered *Asr* prayers therein. Etc.

*(Mulla) Naveed Masood Hashmi in the daily Ausaf; Lahore, December 16, 2016*

The mullas have demanded that the original FIR registered by the police should be discarded and a fresh one be entered. Obviously they would like to fabricate the new one to absolve themselves and add hostile and incorrect information in the amended document.

According to a press report the DCO visited the family of the deceased Muslim to offer condolences. He paid them a sum of Rs. 100,000 at the occasion.

In our opinion, while it is courteous to offer condolences to a bereaved family, it is highly improper for the state to send its functionary to a family whose member was involved in a criminal activity which could have blown up into a massacre. This visit conveys the message: “*Do what you like in the name of Islam; if you come to grief, the state will be sympathetic to your family and will support them financially.*” If this is not terrorism in the name of religion, what else is?

It is almost three weeks that this worship place is locked, and Ahmadis have no place to worship. This is what the mulla wanted. The authorities have delivered that. Mulla is the winner – thanks to his supporters.

‘Ahmadi place of worship may see court case following mob attack’ reported the Dawn on December 19. This is ominous. The mosque should be unsealed first and Ahmadis should be facilitated to pray there as they have been doing since Pakistan came into being. If the mulla wants to go to the court, he may do so; he attempted that in 1997 and quit finding it a hopeless exercise. He may try again.

The government of Punjab might object to being blamed of lethargy, inaction and indirect complicity; after all ‘we succeeded in averting a massacre, with only two dead and the mosque still intact.’ But it ignores that it had to seal the only place of worship with Ahmadis; it remains sealed weeks later to-date. Where should Ahmadis go to offer their obligatory prayers? Is it not its duty and *raison d’etre* according to the Constitution to facilitate citizens’ right to freedom of worship? The government has a huge store of tear gas shells and water cannons to deter a mob from taking an unauthorized route. Why were the police not directed to take these items to Dulmial on 12<sup>th</sup> morning? Why the worship place has not been unsealed yet, even if a judicial decision is to be sought eventually? Was sealing not the option the mulla demanded in the first place? The charge of indirect complicity of the government will stick as long as the Ahmadiyya mosque remains sealed.

Last but not least, some statistics concerning Ahmadiyya mosques, from the day a dictator promulgated anti-Ahmadi ordinance in 1984, till now:

Number of Ahmadiyya mosques demolished	:	27
Number of Ahmadiyya mosque set on fire or damaged	:	21
Number of Ahmadiyya mosques forcibly occupied	:	17
Number of Ahmadiyya mosques construction of which was barred by authorities	:	53
Number of Ahmadiyya mosques sealed by authorities	:	32

### ***Unbelievable – but true***

No state that treats some of its citizens in this manner treads a path of bliss, felicity and peace. History has its own way of retribution and the consequences of past policies and actions are fairly visible even to the dense.