

Difficulties in employment, business

2018

Harassment of an Ahmadi university lecturer

Mustafabad; Faisalabad, January 18, 2018: Mr Adnan Adeel is a lecturer in University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. On January 11 the university administration called him and conveyed, “We have come to know that you are a preacher of Ahmadiyyat. Previously fifty per cent people knew your religious identity, but now almost hundred per cent know it. We have orders from the management to restrict your activities. You should immediately change your mobile ringtone with something else. Delete everything related to Ahmadiyyat from your WhatsApp and Facebook accounts and stay clear of this kind of activities in future.” Mr Adeel promised to exercise caution in future.

Earlier Mr Adeel was once questioned by the admin office on matter related to his belief, on a fake excuse.

Mr Adeel has to exercise caution over something which never bothers other lecturers. Being an Ahmadi is being vulnerable.

Disturbing problems for an Ahmadi lady teacher

Kot Momin, Distt. Sargodha; March 2018: Ms. Ufaq Feroz is serving as headmistress in Government Girls High School Jan Muhammad Wala, Tehsil Kot Momin, Distt. Sargodha. She is facing faith-based hostility in this village. Mulla Mukhtar Qadri of Rattapur Rehan, the neighboring village is very active against her. He persistently incites the locals against her. He has put up hostile banners and posters against Ahmadiyya community in the village. This has affected the staff as well. Ms. Feroz is very upset over this. Her deep concern and worry is shared by her family. It is a difficult situation for her.



“One, who is friendly to Ahmadis, is a traitor, a traitor.” A banner in Kot Momin

Ahmadi loses job for his faith

Mardan; October/November 2018: Mr. Nasim Ahmad was working as Secretary in the Industries Association Small Industrial Estate, Mardan for the past 15 months. He was good at his job, but he lost the job for being an Ahmadi.

There are two groups in this company; one is that of its president and his team while the second is that of the opposition. The opposition accused the president of having a 'Qadiani' as the secretary. It went on for a few months, however the president assured Mr. Ahmad of his support.

On October 28, a member of the opposition group telephoned Mr. Ahmad and told him, "You are an Ahmadi, and you preach the same in the Estate." The next day Mr. Ahmad spoke to the president in his office and informed him of the incident. The president intimated him that for the last one week the management was under great pressure as the opposition has acquired the support of mullas and Khatme Nabuwwat activists.

In reply to Mr. Ahmad's question regarding the follow-up, the president said, "In view of your good work, we do not ask you to leave, but we would not like you to come to harm." This obviously meant that he would like Mr. Ahmad to resign. And Mr. Ahmad handed over the office keys and the company's mobile phone.

Later, the president released a message to his WhatsApp group that Mr. Nasim Ahmad had left for personal reasons. In response, the opposition held a protest rally and recounted president's failures. The president rebutted with a count of his achievements; one of these he mentioned was the removal of Mr. Nasim Ahmad.

Ahmadi's job at risk

Rabwah; April 2018: Mr. Asad Ahmad Sufiyan from Rabwah has been serving in the prison department since August 2017. He was appointed in the district prison at Jhelum. Some employees of the prison came to know of his visits to the Ahmadiyya mosque for Friday prayers; this aroused their hostility. Meanwhile Mr. Sufiyan was sent to Attock for training. On his return, all the staff had come to know of his belief. So, they boycotted him, stopped talking to him, would not eat with him and forbade him to say his prayers in the prison's mosque.

Someone complained to the DSP prison that Sufiyan was a *Mirzai*, a non-Muslim who got his job illegally and was a blasphemer. The DSP sent for Mr. Sufiyan and after preliminary inquiry, told him to report to DIG office in Rawalpindi. He did that, where the superintendent told him of DIG's order to proceed on one month's leave. Mr. Sufiyan had to obey the orders.

Job at risk for belief

Sargodha: The proprietor of Liaquat Hospital here has been warned by mullas to fire Dr Mahmud Ahmad, Ahmadi, or face consequences.

Dr Ahmad is a gastroenterologist. He has been working in Liaquat Hospital for long and enjoys very good reputation. Sometimes back, a few mullas of a Khatme Nabuwwat faction told the proprietor to present Dr Ahmad before a committee of clerics to explain his set of beliefs. Dr Ahmad refused to comply, stopped going to the hospital and told the proprietor to lay him off. As the hospital benefitted a

great deal from Dr Ahmad's reputation, the proprietor refused to let him go. At this, Dr Ahmad resumed work in the hospital.

Again this issue raised its ugly head. Dr Liaquat, the proprietor was contesting the elections as a PML-N candidate. The mullas like Akram Toofani and Aslam Kachhela approached him again and told him that if he fired Dr Ahmad, they would vote for him and support him. They demanded again that Dr Ahmad appear before a committee and spell out his set of beliefs to facilitate a decision on his continuity with his job. In the meantime they obtained a *fatwa* (edict) from the local Darul Ifta that Qadianis should be completely boycotted and not employed.

In view of this Dr Ahmad informed the hospital administration that he would not be attending office for the time being.

Ahmadi faces hardship at job, for his faith

Layya; September 8, 2018: Mr. Muhammad Imran Mukhtyar is a resident of Layya city and has been working in Layya Sugar Mills as a senior store keeper for last five years. In September his head of department called him to his office and told him that his faith had become a problem in the Mills. The boss elaborated his remarks, "We cannot impose anything regarding faith on you; however your faith in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani as a prophet hurts our feelings. We believe the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to be the last prophet, and for this we can give our lives and also we can take the lives of others, as Mumtaz Qadri did with (Governor) Salman Taseer. Your community financially supports its members, so you should arrange another job for yourself to forestall any unhappy incident." Mr. Mukhtyar replied, "We also believe the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to be the last prophet. The livelihood is in the hands of Allah. You can take action against my inefficiency, if any, but to fire me for my faith is not correct. For this, you are accountable to Allah the Almighty."

Subsequent to this interview Mr. Mukhtyar was told by the Admin Manager that he would not return to the main store but then onward he would join the Admin Office.

In view of the veiled threat of his previous boss, Mr. Mukhtyar took additional security precautions for his personal safety.

Ahmadi loses job for his faith

Mirpur, AJK; October 2018: Mr. Khurshid Alam had been serving in a medicine company for the last fifteen years. He is 60. He was a devoted worker and his managers spoke high of him. Recently a man got service in the company; he knew that Alam was an Ahmadi, he disclosed that at the work-place. Three mulla-type workers started a hostile campaign against Alam. The situation did not take long to worsen. Mr. Alam talked to his superiors; they expressed their helplessness as according to them the whole department had turned against him. They advised him to resign or change his belief. So he had to resign from his job in the face of religion-based hostility. He became jobless.

Livelihood and food deprived over faith

Khoski; Badin, January 18, 2018: Mr Suleman Ahmad is an Ahmadi resident of Khoski, Badin. Two years ago he worked in Dairy Land Company, Karachi as a supplier of milk. He availed a month's leave for his wedding. On return he found another man working at his place. That

person acted hostile to Ahmad and incited the owner against him for his faith. As a result, the company laid him off.

After remaining jobless for some months, Mr Ahmad came to know of a Chinese company. He applied and got a job there. On his first day, the clerk told him that the army office had sent for him. When he appeared before the army officer, the following conversation took place between them.

Officer: Who are you? Where are you from?

Mr Ahmad: I am a Muslim.

Officer: What kind?

Mr Ahmad: I am an Ahmadi.

Officer: What does that mean?

Mr Ahmad: Ahmadi is those whom you call *Qadiani* or *Mirzai*.

Officer: Whom do you believe?

Mr Ahmad: We believe in Allah the Almighty, His messenger Muhammad (pbuh), and the *Mahdi* prophesied by Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh).

After this he returned home. The next day his CNIC, identity card was taken. The clerk told him that they did not hire even a Christian there, and the army office would like him fired from the job. "As such you should leave or enter another form with faith as *Sunni*," he said. Mr Ahmad refused his offer and said that he would not tell a lie for a job. He could not depart as they did not return his CNIC. When they returned his CNIC, they stopped his meal from the canteen. They told the canteen owner that he was a *Mirzai* and was to be refused food from there. Mr Ahmad had got his CNIC back; he quit.

Ahmadi deprived of livelihood and residence for faith

Shahkot, Nankana Sahib; February 17, 2018: Mr. Maqbool Ahmad of Shahkot had been working in the local textile mill for a long time. He was given a house in the mill's residential colony. He has a son and three daughters. Soon religious enmity simmered against him. The opponents became openly active against him with a plan.

One day some people visited his house, beat him up and told him, "Vacate the quarter and shift elsewhere, otherwise we will kill you." His son was also beaten up and given the same warning. Earlier Mr Ahmad son's head was hit by them and injured. This boy was in 8th grade and was to appear in exam soon. The mill owner fired Mr Ahmad from the job. He was the only Ahmadi there.

Conspiracy against an Ahmadi-owned school

Kot Shera, District Gujranwala; September 2018: Ahmadiyya community is running G.A. Girls Middle School here; it enjoys good reputation. The school is serving the locals for the last 25 years. Recently the local mulla conspired against this educational institute, and thereby posed a threat to the peace of the locality.

The mulla wrote the names of the founder of the Ahmadiyya community and his successors on a piece of paper and made it public that Ahmadi is had thus included the preaching of their faith in the

syllabus. He incited the locals against Ahmadis over this and made a plan to attack Ahmadis' houses and loot them. In this he obtained the cooperation of Tehrike Labbaik party.

The president of the local Ahmadiyya community came to know of this dangerous plan of the mulla. He approached an influential member of the locality Mr. Salahuddin who had been a counselor in the past and informed him of the situation. The latter went to the mosque to meet the mulla. There he convinced the worshipers that the mulla was misguiding the locals, and the Ahmadis did not teach any such thing in their school. "I know that, as my own daughters go to the same school", he said. He also told the mulla, "You'll go away leaving behind enmities. Refrain from such activities and don't disturb the peace of the locality."

The issue got defused for the time being.

Threat to Ahmadi's fellows in profession

Mardan; April 2018: Mr. Khaleeq Ahmad is a technician expert in repairing transformers. He has trained many, and some of them are now running their own workshops. Mr. Khaleeq also acts as a contractor. Occasionally he helps his former students in their repair work. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan took notice of his contacts and sent them the following threatening letter (*translation*):

"We've received complaint that you sit with Qadianis. You are requested by Pakistan Tehrik-e-Taliban not to trade with a Qadiani as it is forbidden in Islam. We'll act if you would not desist. Neither your shop will survive nor you. Your house will be targeted by us. Commander Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan."

Brilliant Ahmadi asked to resign from Economic Advisory Council (EAC) for his faith

Islamabad; September 7, 2018: Professor Dr Atif Mian, an Ahmadi, member of EAC was asked by the government to resign his membership. It is an interesting but pathetic story that foretells the malevolence of the course of the Pakistani state in years ahead. The report was published by the daily Dawn of September 8; its extracts are reproduced below:

"Under-fire govt asks minority community economist to quit EAC

ISLAMABAD: Within three days of its rhetoric about the rights of minorities, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government bowed down to pressure from religious groups and asked a renowned economist belonging to the Ahmadi community to step down from the Prime Minister-led Economic Advisory Council (EAC) only to lose another EAC member from the private sector hours later over the controversial move.

The government decision to withdraw Dr Atif R. Mian's name from the advisory council was made public through a tweet by Senator Faisal Javed, who is also chairman of the Senate standing committee on information, on Friday morning.

"Atif Mian was asked to step down from the Advisory Council and he has agreed. A replacement would be announced later," Senator Javed tweeted at 8.49 a.m. Over half an hour later, information minister Fawad Chaudhary, who had strongly defended the appointment earlier this week, confirmed the development declaring that the government decided to withdraw his nomination from the EAC to avoid any controversy.

However, the controversy deepened further when another EAC member, Dr Asim Ijaz Khwaja from the Harvard Kennedy School, on Friday evening also stepped down from the council over the withdrawal of Dr Atif's name.

Explaining the circumstances that led to his resignation, Dr Atif said the government was facing tremendous pressure over his appointment from Muslim clerics and their followers. "For the sake of the stability of the Government of Pakistan, I have resigned from the Economic Advisory Council, as the Government was facing a lot of adverse pressure regarding my appointment from the Mullahs (Muslim clerics) and their supporters," he tweeted.

Earlier on Tuesday, the government spokesman had strongly defended Dr Atif's appointment to the EAC on the grounds that Pakistan belongs to majority Muslims as well as non-Muslim minorities. "What is wrong with the appointment of a professional economist as a member of the EAC?" said Mr. Chaudhary while talking to the media. "He is a member of the Economic Advisory Council and not the Council of Islamic Ideology," he remarked.

Three days later the government apparently succumbed to the pressure generated by the call attention notice submitted in both houses of parliament against the appointment of a person belonging to the Ahmadi faith and a petition filed in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) challenging his appointment.

The call attention notice was led by Maulana Asad-ur-Rehman, son of JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, in the National Assembly and by Maulana Ata-ur-Rehman in the Senate. The notice was signed by parliamentarians belonging to the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and even liberals belonging to the Awami National Party, National Party and Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party. The Pakistan Peoples Party, however, did not support the call attention notice.

Explaining reasons for the government decision to withdraw the name, the information minister tweeted: "The government wants to move forward alongside scholars and all social groups, and it is inappropriate if a single nomination creates an otherwise impression."

In another tweet, Mr. Chaudhary elaborated that the ideal state, according to Prime Minister Imran Khan, was of Madina and that the premier and members of his cabinet held Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in high esteem.

... Later Dr Atif, a professor of Economics and the only Pakistani to be considered among International Monetary Fund's (IMF) 'top 25 brightest young economists', tweeted: "Nevertheless, I will always be ready to serve Pakistan as it is the country in which I was raised and which I love a great deal. Serving my country is an inherent part of my faith and will always be my heartfelt desire.

"Moving forward, I now hope and pray that the Economic Advisory Council is able to fulfill its mandate in the very best way so that the Pakistani people and nation can prosper and flourish.

"My prayers will always be with Pakistan and I will always be ready to help it in any way that is required."

...

Meanwhile, Jemima Goldsmith, former spouse of PM Imran Khan, criticized the government decision in her tweet and stated: "The founder of Pakistan, 'Quaid-i-Azam' appointed an Ahmadi as his Foreign Minister."

She said: "Indefensible & very disappointing. New Pak government asks renowned & respected Prof of economics to stand down because of his Ahmadi faith."

In the same issue the Dawn wrote an editorial under the heading 'Jinnah's Pakistan' on this issue and commented as follows:

"A meritorious appointment has been undone for reasons that have nothing to do with professional competence or qualification.

... The political class will try and put the latest capitulation behind it quickly, but the effects will surely linger.

The historical record incontrovertibly demonstrates that concessions to religious zealots further erode the space for rational discourse and decision-making. ... But as security policymakers debate the political mainstreaming

of some extant militant networks, there has been a question whether it is, in fact, extremism that is being mainstreamed in Pakistan.

The religious far right in the country has been mobilized in a manner that ought to worry all right-thinking citizens: short-sighted concessions and manipulations by the state will have far-reaching consequences for society.

...

A brilliant mind has been prevented from serving his country; what hope is there for the average citizen in the face of intolerance and organized hostility? Jinnah's Pakistan is tolerant, progressive, inclusive and democratic. Will Pakistan's leadership return to the vision of the founding father?"

The next day, the Dawn reported: Another jolt for EAC as London-based economist quits in protest. Dr Imran Rasul resigned the membership stated: "If there was one academic on the EAC that Pakistan needs, it was Atif Mian.... Basing decisions on religious affiliation goes against my principles, of the values I am trying to teach my children."

The mullas reaction was different and interesting. Mulla Rab Nawaz who is also an advocate and the president of Khatme Nabuwat Lawyers' Forum, said in a conference; "Mian Atif has been expelled from the EAC, but the government should explain why was he taken in the first place..." *The daily Jang; September 10, 2018*

At this occasion Human Rights Commission of Pakistan issued a press release expressing 'serious concern' over this decision of the government. Its copy is placed at Annex V to this report.

Civil society and Awami Workers Party held a demonstration outside Press club in Islamabad on September 10 and protested against exclusion of Dr. Atif from EAC.

Ahmadi-owned businesses publicized in press for boycott

Lahore: The daily *Islam* published in its issue of July 8, 2018 a list of businesses etc owned allegedly by Ahmadis. This list was compiled by one, Dost Muhammad Baluch of Dera Ismail Khan (KP).

The list comprises in all 39 brands etc. it included industrial products, services, jewelers, pharmacy products, homeopathy medicines, educational institutions, private hospitals, TV channels etc. The list was published under the title Takht-o-Taj Khatme Nabuwat Zinda Baad (Long-live the throne and crown of the end of prophethood).

The list was preceded by the following appeal:

"Those who buy or sell Qadiani products are appealed that the status of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) is higher than our parents, our children, even ourselves. It is our duty to fully boycott these Qadiani products and urge other Muslims to do the same."

Apparently, the authorities have taken no notice of this hateful message published in the daily that calls itself 'Islam', the religion of 95% population of Pakistan.

An Ahmadi's store set on fire

Jinnah Town, Quetta; June 30, 2018: Mr. Fazl ur Rehman is president of Ahmadiyya chapter in Jinnah Town, Quetta. He is a wholesale dealer of cosmetics. He uses the first floor of his house as depot of this stock. He faces opposition and hostility in business for being an Ahmadi.

On June 16, 2018 Mr. Rehman and his family went out for dinner. At about 22:30 his neighbor informed him that his store was on fire. He rushed back and found that the store was

engulfed in flames. Thereafter a fire-brigade party arrived and the fire was extinguished eventually. The entire store and its stock was destroyed.

The store had no electric or gas connection. It seems that someone deliberately set the first floor on fire, as no damage was done to the residential ground floor.

Being Ahmadi (in Pakistan)

Lahore; September 16, 2018: The daily The News International Lahore published an op-ed titled Being Ahmadi. It is a report based on interviews subsequent to the episode of exclusion of Professor Atif Mian an Ahmadi from the Economic Advisory Council. In it personal accounts of three Ahmadis and one human rights lawyer have been included that describe the treatment of Ahmadis by the state and the society. These are reproduced below under suitable headings, for record:

A school teacher

Shafiq Ahmed*, 39-year-old primary school teacher in a government school in a village in Punjab, has had to change schools four times since he came into the teaching profession six years ago.

“Every time, I am told the parents do not have any complaint against me as a teacher, just that they don’t want their kids to be taught by a ‘Qadiani’. The villagers are simple people and they hold the area cleric with utmost respect. So when he tells them being taught by an Ahmadi is worse than being taught by a kafir, they believe him!” The only reason he remained in one school for over a year was because they did not have another teacher so the parents and the education department were compelled to hold on to him.

According to Mehmood (a community official), matters are far worse in Punjab than in the other three provinces. “There is now a ban on publishing and distributing any kind of literature even within the community including the magazines that were published for women, children and youth; our websites are blocked too,” and thus a complete shut down on communication.

Earlier in 2010, the Punjab government had made it mandatory for students to reveal whether they were ‘Muslim or non-Muslim’ before being admitted to school or college, or even before registering for the board exams.

In a private job

Thirty five-year-old Mohammad Saleem*, food technician at a beverage company, where he had happily worked for nine years and received several promotions, had to leave work earlier this year.

Although people knew he was an Ahmadi and he had learnt to let the snide remarks pass, the trouble actually began for him when he reported a fraud to the management, happening under his very nose in a section he was heading.

“Before I knew what hit me, posters with my photo had been plastered all over the factory, declaring I was preaching and converting people to the Ahmadiyya faith,” adds Saleem.

The management reacted quickly and resolved the situation. But it only simmered down, for a month and next we saw posters appearing in the main marketplace of the city he worked in. A religious group informed the area police they would be taking out a rally as well.

“The situation got so tense that the management transferred me to an office in another city overnight. They were very supportive and tried their best but I was neither suited nor qualified for the new

work and I decided to leave,” says Saleem, adding: “They tried to stop me but my mind was made. They said it was their loss since a competent worker had to leave so unfairly,” and even “apologized for not having me back”.

In government service

Thirty-seven year old Ali Habib*, an engineer in the Pakistan Air Force, has a similar story to tell. “I converted into an Ahmadi after I had joined the air force. When my seniors found out, everything changed, and I was declared an apostate, therefore *wajib ul qatl* (duty-bound to be killed). A case was filed against me that I was preaching my faith, which I fought against, for almost three years.”

Fortunately, for him, on cross-questioning, his batch mates proved that assertion to be false. But during that time he not only faced a complete social boycott at the base (where even utensils in the mess were kept separate), but even from his immediate family. “I was under a lot of stress; even my parents and wife refused to meet!”

His supervisors also reprimanded him for not having taken permission to change his religion since he had declared himself a Muslim when he joined the air force. “I countered with examples of colleagues, who had converted while in service, from Christianity to Islam, and who were rewarded with promotions and who had not taken any prior permission either.”

When the air force could not find anything to court martial him, he was forced to resign. “I was asked to leave within 24 hours. My immediate supervisor, apologized to me and told me my performance had been exemplary, but they could not retain me in service,” says Habib.

Sadly, he was not given any benefits that were his due for the years he served in the air force. In addition, to this date all his important documents, including his educational certificates, remain with them despite his repeated requests. “It’s been three years now, and I cannot prove my credentials — neither my work experience nor my educational qualification — to be able to find a good job.”

Identity documents

Human rights lawyer, Yasser Latif Hamdani says by not repealing or amending the discriminatory legislations, the state has been “complicit” in abuses perpetrated against the Ahmadis. So is each and every Pakistani citizen who has yet to refuse to sign an affidavit when applying for a national ID card or a passport stating: “I consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad an impostor prophet. And also consider his followers, whether belonging to the Lahori or Qadiani group, to be non-Muslims”.

“I feel I am doing something reprehensible, but I have done it not once but every five years my passport expires!” says Sohaila Waqar, 65-year-old doctor belonging to the Sunni community. Without signing that document that she is forced to, she cannot have the travel document.

...

*Names have been changed to protect the identity of those people and the names of the cities they now live or work have purposely not been disclosed. (Editor)

