

Police case on ludicrous grounds and its headway in courts

Pir Mahal, District Toba Tek Singh: July/August 2020: Mr. Fazl Saeed, Ahmadi undertook *Qurbani* (cattle sacrifice) at the occasion of Eid festival, and distributed the meat. Ahmadi-bashers reported this to the police who registered a case against Mr. Fazl Saeed, his brother Mr. Munawwar Saeed and his father Mr. Saeed Ahmad under anti-Ahmadi clause PPC 298-C, arrested Mr. Fazl Saeed and locked him up. This was most wrongful as the law does not forbid Ahmadis to undertake *Qurbani* and distribute its meat.

What happened after the *Qurbani*, is worth a place on records, as it shows how the law-enforcing and judicial systems treat Ahmadis in Pakistan.

Mr. Fazl Saeed is a gold-smith by profession and has competitors in the bazaar. Mr. Saeed proceeded to Karachi the next day after Eid to visit his in-laws. In his absence, a local mulla Mufti Abid Farid and one other sent applications to the police against Mr. Saeed for undertaking *Qurbani* and distributing meat 'despite being non-Muslim'. This was followed by a protest demonstration in front of his house. The DSP telephoned Mr. Saeed who told him that he was far away in Karachi. The DSP nevertheless required him to present himself on August 13. Mr. Saeed presented himself at the police station where he was told that a case had been registered against him, his brother and his father. He was arrested and put behind bars. The next day, he was transferred to Toba Tek Singh Jail.

The accused thereafter intended to apply for bail. Mr. Abdul Jabbar Jutt, ex-president of the local bar agreed to act as advocate, but sent in his regrets at the last minute. No other local advocate was willing to defend the Ahmadi accused. The accused had to approach all the way to the district headquarters to hire an attorney. Sardar Ajaib Khan, Advocate came over to Pir Mahal to move the bail application.

The court granted temporary bail to the elderly Mr. Saeed Ahmad and his son Munawwar Saeed. However the magistrate rejected the bail application of the detained Mr. Fazl Saeed, on August 22.

The temporary bail of the other two accused was due for confirmation on September 1, 2020. On this date, a number of mullas and advocates assembled outside the courtroom and indulged in making disorder and agitation. Judge Khalid Bashir, an Additional Session Judge, under the circumstances, rejected the bail application. The confirmations of the temporary bails of the other two accused were also not granted.

So this is what happens to Ahmadis these days. When they practice their religion and are nice to people, they face arrests and prosecution, and the judges do not grant them even bail for the duration pending a final verdict.