

## **Serious violation of Ahmadis' right to practice their faith, (Cattle sacrifice) — an overview**

*July, August 2020:* Sacrificing cattle (*Qurbani*) at the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha festival is a part of Ahmadiyya faith. For the past few years, some extremist elements have been opposing this religious right and have sought authorities' help in this HR violation, particularly in the Punjab. The Constitution and Pakistan law prescribe certain specific restrictions on Ahmadis but *Qurbani* is not one of these.

Last month we reported in our monthly report that Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA) wrote a letter to the federal Ministry of Interior and the I.G. Police, Punjab to issue orders to deny the right of *Qurbani* to Ahmadis. The proposal being 'outside the law' was not followed-up formally by the authorities.

Thereafter one Tayyab Qureshi, Advocate High Court, and Vice-Chairman of the Tajdar-e-Khatme Nabuwwat Committee LHCBA wrote a letter to Inspector General Punjab Police on July 23, 2020 repeating the same demand, giving dubious, questionable and shady religious reasons. He stated that when Ahmadis undertake *Qurbani*, Muslims' sentiments are grossly hurt. He was very presumptuous to say that. Most Non-Ahmadi Muslims welcome *Qurbani* meat from an Ahmadi, unless a mulla is consulted.

The campaign against Ahmadis' practice of *Qurbani* is relatively a recent development. Extremist mullas and their followers wrote letters this year to local and district authorities to deny Ahmadis this right. These letters, accompanied by agitation did create difficulties for Ahmadis again this year at some locations.

Ahmadis had to take suitable precautions at the occasion of *Qurbani* to avoid intervention by mullas and police. They chose to perform the rite in bounded spaces.

Incidents of intrusion by clerics, at times in collusion with police, took place at various locations, for instance in Qasur, Samnabad

Lahore, Gujranwala and village Trigri of the same district. At Pir Mahal District Toba Tek Singh, the police registered a criminal case against three Ahmadis and arrested one of them under the anti-Ahmadiyya law PPC 298-C in which if declared guilty, they could be imprisoned for three years.

A poster was put up in Guldasht Lahore, which conveyed that Ahmadis are not allowed to undertake *Qurbani*, and if anyone becomes aware of the act, he should immediately inform the police on (phone) 15. The poster named its sponsors: 1. Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwwat Forum 2. Tehrik Labbaik Ya Rasul Ullah 3. Tehrik Minhaj ul Quran and 4...Ulama Council. The poster asserted, wrongly, that Ahmadis are not allowed to practice *Qurbani*, Prayers, Fasting, Hajj and *Zakat* (Charity). This betrays their corrupt intentions; once they succeed in denying *Qurbani* to Ahmadis, they would shift to other practices, including denial of Prayers to Ahmadis. The appetite of Hell is reportedly vast; it continues to ask, "Are there any more?".