



PRESS RELEASE

AHMADIYYA MUSLIMS DEPRIVED OF THEIR VOTING RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN FEBRUARY 2024

According to our sources and media reports, Ahmadiyya Muslims are once again deprived of their voting rights, at all levels, as Pakistan prepares for nationwide parliamentary elections in February 2024.

The right to vote is a basic human right in a democracy. Ahmadis are denied this right by devious and discriminatory laws and rules in Pakistan.

Discriminatory provisions in Pakistan's electoral law effectively exclude members of the Ahmadiyya community because of their religious beliefs. To register as voters, Ahmadis must either renounce their faith or agree to be placed in a separate electoral list that categorizes them as "non-Muslim." Self-identification as Muslims, however, is a cornerstone of Ahmadiyya religious belief. Because of this, Ahmadis, who number more than 500,000 in Pakistan, have in practice, been denied the right to vote in local, provincial, and national elections.

In 2002, Pakistan abolished an electoral system in which Muslims and non-Muslims registered and voted in separate categories. The government also created a separate category for Ahmadis. Since then, all Pakistani citizens vote according to a single electoral list except the Ahmadis, who vote on a separate list.

Pakistan's most recent elections law, the Elections Act 2017, retained those provisions regarding the status of the Ahmadis. Under Pakistani law, if someone objects to any voter being identified as non-Muslim, the election commission can summon the person to declare they are not Ahmadi, otherwise they are added to the non-Muslim list. Rather than deny their beliefs, most Ahmadis end up not voting at all.

According to the 2018 report of the EU Electoral Observer Mission: "Although steps were taken to ensure participation of minorities in the electoral process, the situation of the Ahmadi community remains unchanged. They are still registered on a separate electoral roll, contrary to constitutional provisions on the equality of citizens and against international law."

Pakistan's upcoming elections cannot be considered free and fair if an entire community is effectively excluded from the electoral process. Religious disagreements do not justify denying people their right to vote. Pakistani

authorities should allow the full and equal participation of members of the Ahmadiyya community in the general elections and beyond.

Such human rights violations contravene **Article 25 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which protects citizens' right to vote**. The ICCPR expressly prevents distinctions being made on the grounds of religion. Pakistan has signed and agreed to abide by the ICCPR and by putting in place legislation which effectively prevents Ahmadi Muslims from voting, Pakistan acts in direct contravention of international law. This disenfranchisement has been repeatedly criticised by major international organisations including the UN Human Rights Council, the European Union, the State Department of USA, the Parliamentary Human Rights Groups of UK, Sweden, Holland, Belgium, Germany, France and the Asian Human Rights Commission.

Human rights groups have repeatedly expressed their deep concern over the lack of attention to the serious human rights violations perpetrated against the Ahmadiyya community around the world and called on the international community to step up efforts in bringing an end to the ongoing persecution of Ahmadis.

On July 13, 2021, UN human rights experts expressed their deep concern over the lack of attention to the serious human rights violations perpetrated against the Ahmadiyya community around the world and called on the international community to step up efforts in bringing an end to the ongoing persecution of Ahmadis.

We once again urge the international community to pressure the Government of Pakistan to honor its responsibility to provide equal rights for Ahmadis as all its citizens, ensure freedom of religious practice to Ahmadis. The Government of Pakistan must bring its laws and practices in conformity with international standards as ordained by Article 2, 18 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Article 25, 26.

END

ANNEXURE:

**Remorseless anti-Ahmadi articles 7B and 7C ordered by a dictator,
now a part of Election Act 2017**

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**EXTRAORDINARY
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY**

ISLAMABAD, MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2002

PART I

Acts, Ordinances, President's Orders and Regulations

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

**MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS**

(Law, Justice and Human Rights Division)

Islamabad, the 17th June, 2002.

F. No. 2(4)/2002-Pub.—The following Order promulgated by the Chief Executive is hereby published for general information :—

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ORDER No. 15 OF 2002

AN

ORDER

further to amend the Conduct of General Elections Order, 2002

WHEREAS it is expedient to further to amend the Conduct of General Elections Order, 2002 (Chief Executive's Order No. 7 of 2002), for the purposes hereinafter appearing :

(195)

[458(2002) Ex. Gaz.]

Price : Rs. 3.00

Now, THEREFORE, in pursuance of the Proclamation of Emergency of the fourteenth day of October, 1999, and the Provisional Constitution Order No. 1 of 1999, and in exercise of all powers enabling him in that behalf, the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is pleased to make and promulgate the following Order :

1. **Short title and Commencement.**—(1) This Order may be called the Conduct of General Elections (Second Amendment) Order, 2002.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. **Insertion of new Articles 7B and 7C, Chief Executive's Order No. 7 of 2002.**—In the Conduct of General Elections Order, 2002 (Chief Executive's Order No. 7 of 2002), after Article 7A, the following new Articles shall be inserted, namely :—

"7B. Status of Ahmadis etc. to remain unchanged.—Notwithstanding anything contained in the Electoral Rolls Act, 1974 (XXI of 1974), the Electoral Rolls Rules, 1974, or any other law for the time being in force, including the Forms prescribed for preparation of electoral rolls on joint electorate basis in pursuance of Article 7 of the Conduct of General Elections Order, 2002 (Chief Executive's Order No. 7 of 2002), the status of Qadiani Group or the Lahori Group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name) or a person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the last of the prophets or claimed or claims to be a Prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (peace be upon him) or recognizes such a claimant as a Prophet or a religious reformer shall remain the same as provided in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973."

"7C.—If a person has got himself enrolled as voter and objection is filed before the Revising Authority notified under the Electoral Rolls Act, 1974, within ten days from issuance of the Conduct of General Elections (Second Amendment) Order, 2002, that such a voter is not a Muslim, the Revising Authority shall issue a notice to him to appear before it within fifteen days and require him to sign a declaration regarding his belief about the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Form-IV prescribed under the Electoral Rolls Rules, 1974. In case he refuses.

to sign the declaration as aforesaid, he shall be deemed to be a non-Muslim and his name shall be deleted from the joint electoral rolls and added to a supplementary list of voters in the same electoral area as non-Muslims. In case the voter does not turn up in spite of service of notice, an *ex parte* order may be passed against him."

حلف نامہ دا قرار نامہ

میں حلف نامہ دینا کرنا اگر کرتی ہوں کہ میں خاتم النبیین حضرت محمد ﷺ کی قسم بیعت پر مکمل اور غیر مشروط طور پر ایمان رکھتا/رکھتی ہوں۔ اور یہ کہ میں کسی ایسے شخص کا/کی بیوہ کا نہیں ہوں جو حضرت محمد ﷺ کے بعد اس لحاظ کے کسی بھی منہج یا کسی بھی تشریح کے لحاظ سے پیغمبر ہونے کا دعویدار ہو۔ اور نہ ہی میں ایسے دعویدار کو پیغمبر یا نبی مسلحانتا/انتی ہوں۔ نہ ہی میں قادیانی گروہ یا لادہری گروہ سے تعلق رکھتا/رکھتی ہوں یا خود کو لادہری کہتا/کہتی ہوں۔

Sd/-
GENERAL,
PERVEZ MUSHARRAF,
Chief Executive
of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
'And Chief of Army Staff.

Sd/-
MR. JUSTICE,
MANSOOR AHMED,
Secretary.