

NEWS RELEASE

HRCP REPORT REVEALS ALARMING ESCALATION IN PERSECUTION OF AHMADIS IN PAKISTAN

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has released a new report, *Under Siege: Freedom of Religion or Belief in 2023/24*, which exposes the alarming scale of state-led and mob-driven persecution against religious minorities, including the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The report documents a pattern of systemic oppression, including arbitrary arrests, desecration of graves, and violent crackdowns on the community's religious practices.

A key finding of the report is the increasing weaponisation of blasphemy laws against Ahmadis, often initiated by law enforcement officials themselves. The report notes that at least four First Information Reports against Ahmadis in Punjab were filed by police officers, reflecting an institutional bias against the community. In a disturbing escalation, authorities in Punjab and Sindh conducted mass arrests of Ahmadis under the Punjab Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance, with at least 36 Ahmadi men detained for observing Eid-ul-Adha rituals.

The HRCP report also highlights the growing influence of extremist groups in driving state policies against Ahmadis. The report documents how members of the far-right Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) played a direct role in filing blasphemy cases against Ahmadis, orchestrating campaigns to prevent their Eid-ul-Adha celebrations, and even participating in police raids to confiscate sacrificial meat. Disturbingly, videos circulating on social media show TLP activists alongside law enforcement personnel raiding Ahmadi households, reinforcing the complicity of state actors in religious persecution.

Grave desecration remains a recurring violation against the community. The report reveals that in 2023 and 2024, numerous Ahmadiyya cemeteries across Punjab and Sindh were attacked, with police and district authorities actively participating in some instances. Additionally, at least 42 attacks on Ahmadi places of worship were recorded in the reporting period, with nearly 60% of these either conducted or supervised by law enforcement agencies.

The HRCP report makes it clear that the persecution of Ahmadis is not incidental but part of a deliberate strategy to exclude the community from public life. The Pakistani state has not only failed to curb extremist violence but has actively facilitated it, creating an environment where hate speech, religious discrimination, and faith-based violence occur with complete impunity.

Key recommendations from the HRCP report include:

- Federal and provincial governments must hold to account individuals who incite hatred and violence of minorities.
- District authorities and law enforcement' arbitrary raids, arrests and intimidation of Ahmadis must cease immediately.
- Law enforcement must stop being complicit in the vandalism on Ahmadiyya places of worship and burial sites.
- Authorities must stop putting the onus on persecuted groups to maintain religious harmony and social order.

The findings of this report underscore an urgent human rights crisis. Human Rights stakeholders must not remain silent as Pakistan continues to escalate its systematic persecution of Ahmadis and other religious minorities. Immediate diplomatic and policy interventions are needed to hold Pakistan accountable for its obligations under international human rights law.

The full HRCP report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/4z37djpu>

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