

# The Index of Religious Diversity and Inclusion in PAKISTAN



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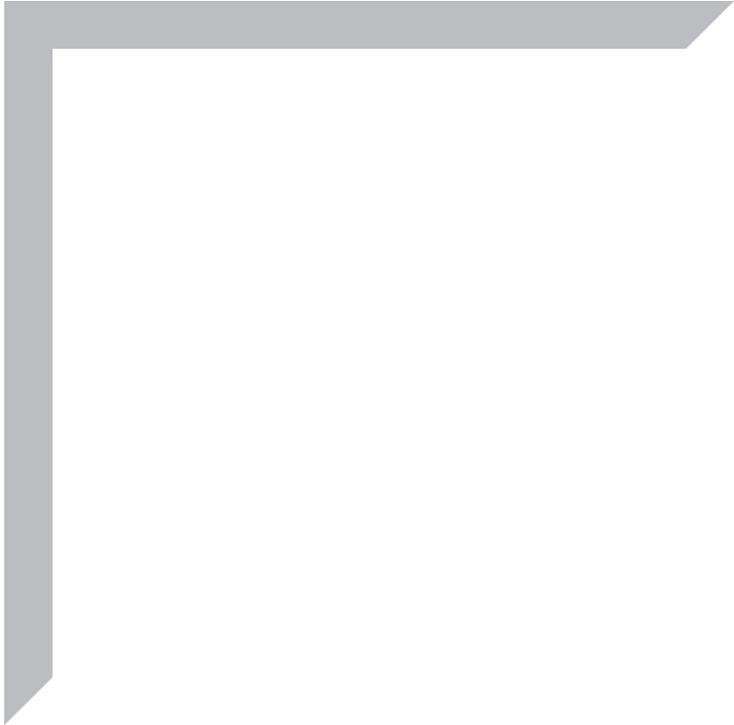
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The Index of  
**Religious Diversity**  
and  
**Inclusion in PAKISTAN**  

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An Exploratory Study with Initial Recommendations

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# Abbreviations

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|       |   |
|-------|---|
| CPPG  | Centre for Public Policy and Governance       |
| ECP   | Election Commission Pakistan                  |
| ETPB  | Evacuee Trust Property Board                  |
| FCCU  | Forman Christian College University           |
| FSC   | Federal Shariat Court                         |
| PPP   | Pakistan People's Party                       |
| UCH   | United Christian Hospital                     |
| KP    | Khyber Pakhtunkhawa                           |
| PML-N | Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz                  |
| PPP   | Pakistan People's Party                       |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |

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# Executive Summary

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah promised equality, social justice and generosity towards non-Muslims. These standards deteriorated over time. Late prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and military dictator Zia-ul-Haq introduced several Islamic laws. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz carried this agenda for a while. Former military strongman General (r) Pervez Musharraf took drastic steps and since then several positive developments have taken place.

The minority population has decreased from about 44 per cent to 3.6 per cent in the areas that are now Pakistan, but it is largely due to the Partition in 1947 and cessation of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971. These communities greatly vary in their challenges, history, size, geographic dispersion and influence in the state affairs. The study was done with 100 respondents from Christian, Sikh, Baha'i, Upper Caste Hindu, Scheduled Caste Hindu and Parsees. Ahmadis were included in this study because Article 260(3)(2) has declared them a non-Muslim minority.

The study, conducted in Lahore, found that issues faced by religious minorities (such as Hindus, Christians, Sikhs) have become complex since Ahmadis were combined with them. There is a theological conflict between Muslims and Ahmadis. Several legal measures aimed at Ahmadis impact all minorities. Following are the other main aspects the study found:

- More conflict is reported among monotheistic/evangelical belief systems (more blasphemy cases filed against Muslims, Ahmadis and Christian than any other faith).
- Except Ahmadis and Baha'is, other minorities have a racial outlook. Sikhs reported conflicting views if they have distinctive racial features.
- The educational level and economic prosperity vary among minorities; some of the minorities live in abject poverty and sheer illiteracy.
- Some of religious minorities are associated with a foreign country, especially the countries considered an “enemy” of Pakistan.
- Guilty by association (stereotyped communities have suffered mob violence).
- Some minorities suffer stigmas, stereotyping and prejudices.
- Construction of a new religious place is challenging but not impossible as often believed.
- Most of the members of minorities live in concentrated neighbourhoods.
- Christians are in permanent migration since 1947.
- Landlessness is a major issue faced by minorities coming from the so-called untouchable background i.e. Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus.
- Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus particularly cited scarcity of burial places.
- Illegal possession of places belonging to minorities is cited by all minority members.
- Caste-based social stigmas play a significant role in choosing a livelihood.
- Christians faced the highest level of caste-based name-calling of “Chuhra”; hence, they fear starting small businesses, especially food-related.
- Marriage of a Muslim minor girl is treated as a crime while marriage with a non-Muslim minor girl with a Muslim man turns into a religious conflict.
- Not all religious minorities report forced conversion to Islam and marriage of their young girls.
- The question about harassment of minority women received varying responses; some believed there was more harassment while others believed it was a general trend and even less for minority women
- Use of religious symbols in public spaces by minority persons is often avoided
- Some minorities prefer doing business while others believe they cannot do business because of societal bias

- Refusal of a job because of faith is complex and varies from private to the public sector, geography, community and the level of a job
- Freedom of publication of religious literature varies from communities and geography
- All minorities reported that a candid and decent religious dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims was almost impossible; thus avoided
- Almost all minorities are migrating: Only Christian and Ahmadis are seeking political asylum in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Malaysia; almost all Parsee youth have migrated to western countries but always as economic migrants and not refugees.
- The wave of terrorism that started after 9/11 mainly hit the Christian community, especially Protestant institutions and churches.
- Only Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus suffer from bonded labour.
- Constitution of Pakistan and manifestos of political parties stress equality and justice for religious minorities but there is little effort to make this a political discourse.

**The study has put forward the following recommendations (given in detail at the end of the report)**

- Regularisation of illegal minority neighbourhoods
- Monitoring mechanism for effective implementation of the job quota
- Special efforts to be made, including special budgetary allocations, to ensure provision of graveyards and cremation grounds
- Preferential development schemes for poor minority neighbourhoods
- Denationalising missionary educational institutions that are still under the control of the government
- Special training modules for law enforcement agencies on handling issues related to religious minorities
- When a legal of forced conversion of a non-Muslim woman is filed, the court should involve reliable non-government organisation or minority individuals as amicus curiae for strengthening faith in the legal process
- Textbooks provide inclusive worldview in which religious minorities are depicted as well-wishers of Pakistan. For this purpose, members of minority communities be included in the curriculum designing team
- Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech be made part of school textbooks
- Introduce an acceptable, inclusive and more viable alternative of Islamic Studies for minority students
- Introduce an education quota for deserving minority students to deal with their marginality and backwardness
- Minorities be given a sufficient number of positions of power, like in diplomatic missions; also ensure their promotion in government departments
- Stigmas and stereotypes against religious minorities be discouraged through textbooks, public service messages
- Personal laws of religious minorities be enacted/improved in line with the fundamental guarantees assured in the Constitution of Pakistan
- Political participation be increased by giving tickets to minority members on general seats



**Shiv Temple in Umar Kot**

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

*“We cannot deprive minorities, especially Christians, of their due rights ... The Christian minority will be given its due right in policymaking in this cabinet ... We will hold Christians with respect for what they have done to us (by casting vote in Pakistan's favor)”.*

Education Minister Sheikh Karamat Ali, addressing the Punjab Assembly on January 5, 1948

The Constitution of Pakistan presents a dichotomy of Muslims and non-Muslims. A corpus of reports has been produced on the non-Muslims. These reports often treat non-Muslims as one homogenous group who are actually diverse in terms of their religion, culture, history, role in the creation of Pakistan, economic status, the educational level, negative racial profiling, level of social acceptance, legal restrictions in profession of their faith, language, ethnicity, occupation and geographic dispersion etc. Hence, most of one-size-fit-for-all statements and recommendations on these non-Muslims are often not free of error.

Religious minorities include Christians, Hindus (Upper Caste and Scheduled Caste), Parsees (Zoroastrians), Sikhs, Baha'is, Buddhist, Jews and Kelashis. They are about 3.6 per cent of the total 207 million population. Sometimes Shiites are also described as a minority. The report, however, limits its scope to the definition of Article 260(3)(b) of the Constitution of Pakistan.

*A person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Parsee (Zoroastrian) community, a person of Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves Ahmadis or by any other name), or a Baha'i, and a person belonging to any of the scheduled castes.*

Sociologist Louis Wirth explains that a minority is “a group of people distinguished by physical or cultural characteristics subject to different and unequal treatment by the society in which they live and who regard themselves as victims of collective discrimination”. Therefore, it has become common to object the use of this word. However, refusal alone is not sufficed if “unequal treatment” exists. The report also uses this term because it is the standard term used before and during partition of the united India in 1947.

Although the study is first of its kind and exploratory in nature, the report raises questions on several claims made on the issues of religious minorities. It mainly captures “perceptions” of how different religious minorities view their problems.

At the same time, it is important to note that improving social, political and economic conditions of religious minorities will improve national cohesion and image of the country abroad. This study is conducted with this aim and it provides recommendations for policymakers, parliamentarians, law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders who intend to understand the varying nature of their challenges.

Lastly, the report divides issues of religious minorities in 10 major categories and then divides each section in many subsections, which is why it is called an “index”.



**The Baha'i Centre in Islamabad**

# CHAPTER TWO

## BACKGROUND

In August 1947, Pakistan emerged as the fifth most populous country in the world; the second largest in the Muslim world; and the first Muslim nation-state with the ideals of equality, democracy, constitutionalism and social justice. It consisted of two wings, separated by 1,000 miles: East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (now Islamic Republic of Pakistan). The country was diverse in language, ethnicity, caste, religion and geography.

In 1881, Muslims were 19.7 per cent, Hindus 74 per cent, and other religious minorities were about 5 per cent of the total population of the British Indian Empire. The self-proclaimed “secular” Indian National Congress was established in 1885 as an umbrella political party but it failed to provide adequate political representation to Muslims and other minorities. This resulted in the creation of the All India Muslim League, “heavily supported by mainly landed and commercial Muslim interests” and headed by Ismaili Shiite Imam Aga Khan IV in 1906<sup>1</sup>.

The Muslim League proposed separate electorates in which Muslims were to elect their own representatives in Muslim majority areas. The Morley-Minto Reforms, also known as Indian Council Act 1909, granted Muslims separate electorates in 1909. In 1930, the great Muslim thinker and poet and President of the Muslim League, Sir Muhammad Iqbal proposed “the consolidation of the Moslem northwest ... in a single political unit within an all-India federation”.

By 1930s, Muslims had increased to 24 per cent of the total population of the British Indian Empire and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was made the lifetime president of the Muslim League. In the 1937 elections, the Muslim League could secure only 4.8 per cent of the total Muslim vote and only 109 seats out of 482 allocated for Muslims. In 1940, Muslim League expressed its resolve for an independent state consisting of Muslim majority areas. The Congress did not agree to the proposal.

The united India was divided into Pakistan with a non-Muslim minority of 44 per cent and India with a Muslim minority of 12 per cent<sup>2</sup>. The provinces of Punjab and Bengal were divided between India and Pakistan. After partition, at least 15 million Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were uprooted, and crossed borders to be in the state of their religion, in what was the largest recorded migration in human history<sup>3</sup>. The Partition was “accompanied by a death toll credibly estimated at between 200,000 and 2 million”<sup>4</sup>. This migration changed hundreds of years' religious demography in the region over months and years.

By the 1951 census, the population of non-Muslims had dropped to 14.1 per cent in Pakistan. Census data from East Bengal<sup>5</sup> and Sindh<sup>6</sup> shows that it was mainly the Upper Caste Hindus who had migrated to India. The Sikhs also migrated in large numbers from West Punjab. But the migration among Scheduled Caste Hindus, Christians, Parsees and other smaller religious communities was lower. Scheduled Caste Hindus

1. John Keay, *India: A History* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2000), 468.

2. Areas Studies Division, *American University, Area Handbook for Pakistan* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), 38.

3. William Dalrymple, “The Great Divide: The Violent Legacy of Indian Partition,” *The New Yorker*, June 22, 2015, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/29/the-great-divide-books-dalrymple>.

4. “Brendan O’leary, “Partition,” in *A Companion to Border Studies*, ed. Thomas M Wilson and Hastings Donnan (New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012), 44, <http://www.credoreference.com/book/wileycbost>.

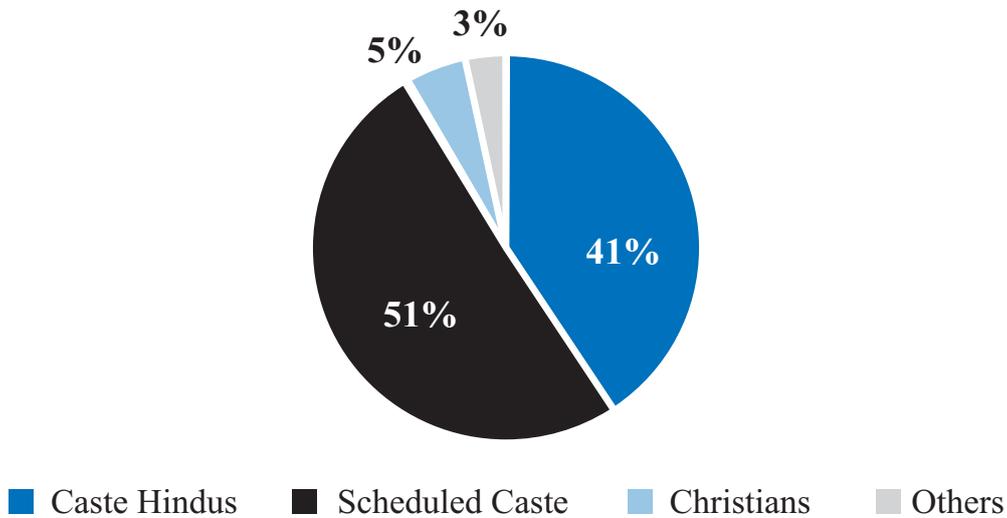
5. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay and Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury, “Partition, Displacement, and the Decline of the Scheduled Caste Movement in West Bengal,” in *The Politics of Caste in West Bengal*, ed. Uday Chandra, Geir Heierstad, and Kenneth Bo Nielsen, 1st Edition (New York: Routledge, 2015), 62.

6. Asif Aqeel, “Problems with the Electoral Representation of Non-Muslims,” *News, Feature and Opinion, Herald*, March 1, 2018, <https://herald.dawn.com/news/1154039>.

probably did not migrate due to lack of resources, and also because of their preference for a country where they were not going to be discriminated against because of their birth in a “low” caste. Jews, who were in a good number in Karachi, started migrating from 1948 after Israel came into existence.<sup>7</sup>

By 1961, the minority population further decreased by two per cent because the communal migration was still going on. Authorities in West Pakistan reported that the refugees from India were entering until 1956 and then the numbers decreased. But migration continued in East Pakistan for various reasons.

### Per 1951 Census



The population in East Pakistan was one-fifth times larger than that of West Pakistan. However, the Muslim population was equal on both sides. It was mainly the Upper Caste and Scheduled Caste Hindu population that enhanced the numbers in East Pakistan.

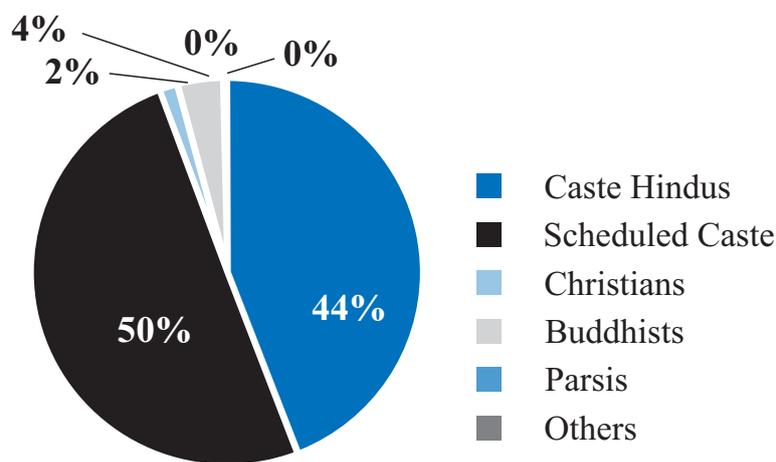
|                      | All               | Muslims           | Caste Hindus     | Scheduled Castes | Christians     | Others         |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Pakistan</b>      | <b>75,636,000</b> | <b>64,959,000</b> | <b>4,349,000</b> | <b>5,421,000</b> | <b>541,000</b> | <b>366,000</b> |
| <b>West Pakistan</b> | <b>33,704,000</b> | <b>32,732,000</b> | <b>162,000</b>   | <b>369,000</b>   | <b>434,000</b> | <b>7000</b>    |
| <b>East Pakistan</b> | <b>41932000</b>   | <b>32227000</b>   | <b>4187000</b>   | <b>5052000</b>   | <b>107000</b>  | <b>359000</b>  |

7. Mahim Maher, “The Jews Built Karachi, but We Built Shopping Plazas on Their Synagogue,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, November 3, 2013, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/626468/secret-histories-the-jews-built-karachi-but-we-built-shopping-plazas-on-their-synagogue/>.

In West Pakistan, Christians were the second largest minority after the Scheduled Castes. There were also 5,000 Zoroastrians, almost all of whom lived in Karachi. Buddhists and about 15,329 adherents of tribal religions lived in East Pakistan.

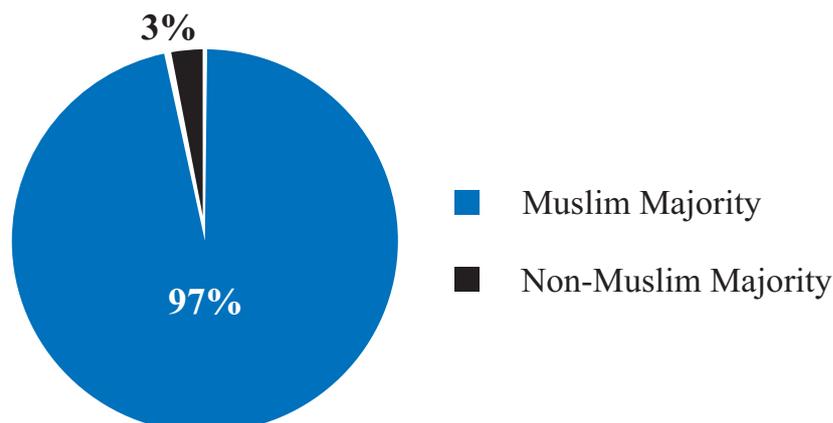
| Religion         | 1961          |               |           |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
|                  | West Pakistan | East Pakistan | Total     |
| Scheduled Castes | 418,011       | 4,993,046     | 5,411,057 |
| Christians       | 583,884       | 148,903       | 732,787   |
| Caste Hindus     | 203,794       | 4,386,623     | 4,590,417 |
| Buddhists        | 2,445         | 373,867       | 376,312   |
| Parsis           | 5,219         | 193           | 5,412     |
| Others           | 872           | 31,793        | 32,665    |

### Pakistan as per 1961 Census



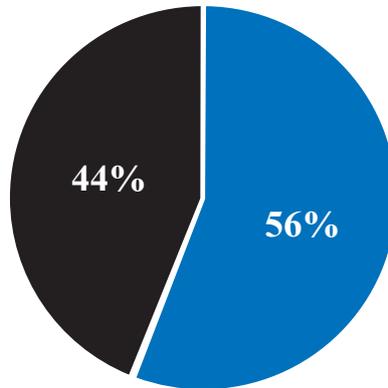
Year 1970 brought another major demographic change in the number of non-Muslims. The general elections were held for 300 seats of the National Assembly on December 7. The Awami League of East Pakistan secured 160 seats while in West Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) could only secure 81. This caused a conflict between both wings of the country and ultimately paved the way for the creation of Bangladesh. The census was due in 1971, but due to the war between India and Pakistan, it was held in 1972. In this census, the proportion of minorities dramatically decreased from 12 per cent to around 3 per cent:

### Population of Pakistan per 1972 Census Majority vs Minority



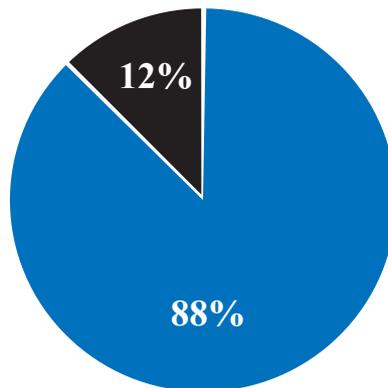
## Population of Muslims and Non-Muslims in the Area that are Now Part of Pakistan. (As per the 1941 Census)

■ Muslim Majority      ■ Non-Muslim Majority



## Population of Pakistan (both East and West Pakistan) as per 1951 Census - Majority vs Minority

■ Muslim Majority      ■ Non-Muslim Majority

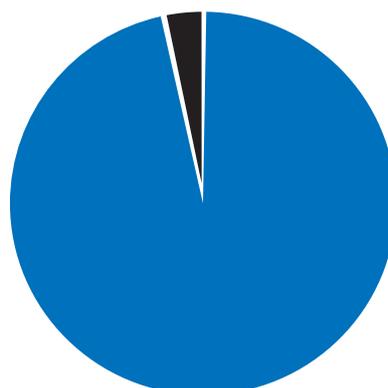


## Population of Pakistan in 1981 - Majority vs Minority

■ Muslim Majority      ■ Non-Muslim Majority

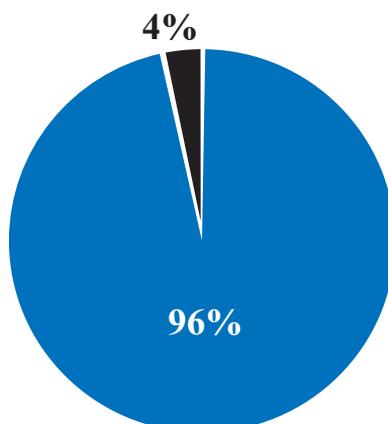
■ Population of Pakistan in 1981 - Majority vs Minority, Non-Muslim Minority, 2803587, 3%

■ Population of Pakistan in 1981 - Majority vs Minority, Muslim Majority, 81450057, 97%



## Population of Pakistan in 1998 - Majority vs Minority

■ Muslim Majority      ■ Non-Muslim Majority



The data of 2017 census on religious minorities has not been released yet. The census data of 1998 on religious minorities is as follows:

|                    | Muslim | Christian | Hindu (Jati) | Ahmadii | Scheduled Castes | Others |
|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|---------|------------------|--------|
| <b>Pakistan</b>    | 96.28  | 1.59      | 1.60         | 0.22    | 0.25             | 0.07   |
| <b>NWFP</b>        | 99.44  | 0.21      | 0.03         | 0.24    | *                | 0.08   |
| <b>FATA</b>        | 99.6   | 0.07      | 0.03         | 0.21    | 0.03             | 0.07   |
| <b>Punjab</b>      | 97.21  | 2.31      | 0.13         | 0.25    | 0.03             | 0.07   |
| <b>Sindh</b>       | 91.31  | 0.97      | 6.51         | 0.14    | 0.99             | 0.08   |
| <b>Balochistan</b> | 98.75  | 0.40      | 0.49         | 0.15    | 0.10             | 0.10   |
| <b>Islamabad</b>   | 95.53  | 4.07      | 0.02         | 0.34    | *                | 0.03   |



**The Cathedral of Holy Redeemer in Multan**

# CHAPTER THREE

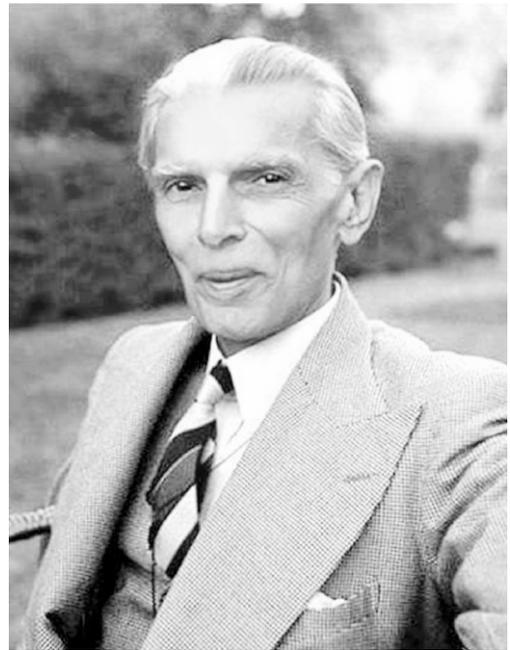
## PAKISTAN: THE LAND OF EQUALITIES

*Keeping in mind the Islamic traditions, Quaid-e-Azam said “The day will come when the Christians of Pakistan will bless the day they chose to be Pakistanis”.*

Punjab Assembly Christian Parliamentarian Satya Parkash Singh in his assembly speech on January 20, 1948

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah made several promises to the minority communities. From 1941 onwards, Mr Jinnah gave several policy level assurances to them that can be summed up as the following:

1. Non-Muslims will be treated like brothers and sisters.
2. Religious minorities will be protected and safeguarded to the “fullest extent”.
3. Minorities will be treated with justice, equality, fair play, tolerance and “even with generosity”.
4. Caste discrimination will not be practiced.
5. Minorities will be “equal citizens in every respect”.
6. Minorities will not just have a representation but a “hand in government”.
7. No questioning of their loyalty to the country (by default they will be considered loyal).<sup>8</sup>



In 1941, when Mr Jinnah was campaigning for the creation of Pakistan in Aligarh Muslim University, he was told that “Hindus and Sikhs would be on sufferance” in Pakistan. During his address, he said, “*It ... is entirely untrue. Islam stands for justice, equality, fair play, toleration and even generosity to non-Muslims who may be under our protection. They are like **brothers** to us and would be the citizens of the state.*”

Mr Jinnah almost verbatim repeated this during the All-India Muslim League session in Delhi in April 1943:

*We have passed a resolution that the minorities must be protected and safeguarded to the fullest extent ... our own history and our Prophet [Peace Be Upon Him] have given the clearest proof that non-Muslims have been treated not only justly and fairly but generously.*

Viceroy of India Lord Louis Mountbatten announced the Partition on June 3, 1947, which “*stipulated that the Bengal and Punjab assemblies would also vote on whether their provinces should remain united or be divided on a religious basis.*”<sup>9</sup> When the creation of Pakistan neared, communal riots broke out, prompting Mountbatten to summon a meeting on July 22, 1947, of officials of the future governments of India and Pakistan.

8. "Asif Aqeel, "Echoing Jinnahs Vision for Religious Minorities," The Friday Times, August 14, 2015, <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/echoing-jinnahs-vision-for-religious-minorities/>.

9. "Ishtiaq Ahmed, "Did S P Singhas Vote Win Punjab for Pakistan in 1947?," News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, November 24, 2014, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/102399/did-s-p-singhas-vote-win-punjab-for-pakistan-in-1947/>.

From Pakistan's side, Mr Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, who later became the first prime minister of Pakistan, attended the moot. After the meeting a communique was issued which read:

*Both the (Indian National) Congress and the (All India) Muslim League have given assurances of fair and equitable treatment to the minorities after the transfer of power. The two future Governments re-affirm these assurances. It is their intention to safeguard the legitimate interests of all citizens irrespective of religion, caste or sex.*

Dewan Bahadur Satya Parkash Singha, commonly known as SP Singh, a Christian, was the last speaker of the united Punjab Assembly. On June 23, the assembly voted to decide the province's fate – whether it would stay a part of India or join the newly-created Pakistan. Three Christian parliamentarians, including Singha (though symbolically), voted that Punjab be divided and part of it brought into the fold of Pakistan.

(SP Singha was the first Speaker of Pakistan's Punjab Assembly and remained in office from March 21, 1946<sup>10</sup> to January 4, 1948. He was succeeded by Khan Bahadur Sheikh Faiz Muhammad who occupied the post from January 5 to January 25, 1949. However, the Punjab Assembly website does not mention that Singha was the first Speaker of the assembly.)<sup>11</sup>

While horrendous clashes in many parts of the two independent states were going on, Pakistan's First Constituent Assembly met in Karachi for the first time on August 10. It was composed of 69 members, 18 of them were non-Muslim. The House unanimously chose Jogendra Nath Mandal, a Scheduled Caste Hindu, as the Chairman of the House. Among many other things, Mandal said:

*People of minority communities in Pakistan may be assured, as they have been assured repeatedly by the Muslim League leaders, and particularly Quaid-e-Azam Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah, that the people of minority communities would not only be treated justly and fairly but **generously too.***

On August 11, Mandal chaired the session in which a resolution was presented for the election of Mr. Jinnah as the president of the House. “All nomination papers are valid, and, as there is no other candidate, I hereby declare Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah as the duly elected president of the Constituent Assembly,” Mandal announced.

Addressing Mr Jinnah, Mandal said that “on behalf of eight million of the Scheduled Castes inhabiting the State of Pakistan, whom I have the honour to represent in this House, I offer you most sincere congratulations.”

It was there that Mr Jinnah delivered his most famous speech. Pakistan's former high commissioner to the United Kingdom, Wajid Shamsul Hassan says that right after the speech was delivered, there were efforts not to let it go to the press.<sup>12</sup>

Mr Jinnah, in this speech said:

*You may belong to any religion or caste or creed-that has nothing to do with the business of the State ... We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State.*

10. Punjab Legislative Assembly, “Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates From 21st March to 19th July 1946” (Superintendent, Government Printing, 1946), <https://www.pap.gov.pk/uploads/verbatim/text/en/pb-legis-assembly-debates-vol-xxv-1946.pdf>.

11. Punjab Legislative Assembly.

12. Wajid Shamsul Hassan, “Rebaptising the Quaid,” News, Feature and Opinion, The News, December 25, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/260330-rebaptising-the-quaid>.

After Mr Jinnah's speech, Liaquat Ali Khan presented a resolution for the adoption of the national flag of the federation.

*The flag is the Flag of Pakistan Nation, of the Pakistan State which has to come into existence on the 15th of August ... I can say without any fear of contradiction that this Flag which I had the honour to present to this House, will stand for **freedom, liberty and equality** (Cheers) to those who owe allegiance to this Flag of Pakistan ... I visualise the State of Pakistan ... **where every citizen will have equal rights and equal opportunities.***

The Constituent Assembly met again on August 12 under the chair of Mr Jinnah and constituted the Committee on Fundamental Human Rights and Minorities of Pakistan.

The Constituent Assembly met for the fourth time on August 14, presided over by Mr Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten. Addressing the assembly, Lord Mountbatten said:

*May I remind you of the terms of that Statement (that was signed on July 22)? The two Governments (of India and Pakistan) declared that "it is their intention to safeguard the legitimate interests of all citizens, irrespective of religion, caste or sex. In the exercise of their normal civic rights all citizens will be regarded as equal and both Governments will assure to all people within their territories the exercise of liberties such as freedom of speech, the right to form associations, the right to worship in their own way and the protection of their language and culture.*

*May I remind you that at the time when the East India Company received its Charter, nearly four centuries ago, your great Emperor Akbar was on the throne whose reign was marked by perhaps as great a degree of political and religious tolerance as has been known before or since.*

Mr Jinnah responded to Lord Mountbatten with these words:

*The tolerance and good-will that the great Emperor Akbar showed to all the non-Muslims is not of recent origin. It dates back thirteen centuries ago when our Prophet [Peace Be Upon Him] not only by words but by deeds treated the Jews and Christians handsomely after he had conquered them. He showed to them the utmost tolerance and regard and respect for their faith and beliefs. The whole history of Muslims, wherever they ruled, is replete with those humane and great principles which should be followed and practised by us.*

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10. Punjab Legislative Assembly, "Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates From 21st March to 19th July 1946" (Superintendent, Government Printing, 1946), <https://www.pap.gov.pk/uploads/verbatim/text/en/pb-legis-assembly-debates-vol-xxv-1946.pdf>.

11. Punjab Legislative Assembly.

12. Wajid Shamsul Hasan, "Rebaptising the Quaid," News, Feature and Opinion, The News, December 25, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/260330-rebaptising-the-quaid>.

On August 17, Mr Jinnah attended the Sunday mass to give a message of religious harmony. Hector Bolitho in his book *Mr Jinnah* (1954) writes:

*August 17 was a Sunday, and the Anglican Archdeacon had arranged for a special service of prayer and thanksgiving, in Holy Trinity Church, the Anglican Cathedral in Karachi. The Archdeacon had also composed a special prayer, in which the Quaid was mentioned. When Jinnah heard of this, he asked that he might be allowed to attend the service, in State. In recording this solemn act, Mr Wilfred Russell wrote, "Mr Jinnah, who knew only too well the orthodox fervour of many Muslims, might well have been taking a political risk in making this graceful and moving gesture to the Christian community of Karachi."*<sup>13</sup>

In Mr Jinnah's Pakistan, Mandal was made the law minister, while Sir Zafarullah Khan, an Ahmadi, was made the foreign minister. SP Singha, a Christian, was the first Speaker of the Punjab Assembly while another Christian, Fazl Illahi, was the first Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly. Mr Jinnah personally requested Jagannath Azad, a Hindu poet, to write the anthem of Pakistan, which remained the national anthem of the country for some time.<sup>14</sup>

## The Changing Status of Religious Minorities

Mr Jinnah once said: *"The Constitution and the Government will be what the people will decide. The only question is that of minorities."*

Dr Martin Lau in his paper *"Islam and the Constitutional Foundations of Pakistan"* writes that this question *"was a legally surmountable problem"*. But Mr Jinnah answered this question three months before independence:

*"There is only one answer. The minorities must be protected and safeguarded. The minorities in Pakistan will be citizens of Pakistan and enjoy all the rights, privileges and obligations of citizenship without distinction of caste, creed or sect,"* Lau writes.<sup>15</sup>

The diverse culture and languages of the provinces was a monstrous problem. The only way to deal with it was a religious identity that could supersede ethnic identities. Brookings Institute's Dr Matthew J Nelson, writes:

*Building on the work of a group known as the Pakistan Educational Conference ... which, in late 1947, endorsed an 'Ideology of Pakistan' devoted to the inculcation of Islamic values in a push to counter fears of encroaching 'provincialism' ... the Constituent Assembly began its work with a landmark resolution known as the Objectives Resolution in March 1949.*<sup>16</sup>

But after Mr Jinnah's death in September 1948, his ideals of democracy, equality and social justice for all were presented in a different light.<sup>17</sup>

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13. Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah: Creator of Pakistan* (London: John Murray, 1954), 200.

14. "Another Time, Another Anthem," *News & Reporting*, DAWN.COM, September 19, 2009, <http://www.dawn.com/news/845479>.

15. Rainer Grote and Tilmann Röder, *Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

16. Mathew J Nelson, "Islamic Law in an Islamic Republic," in *Constitution Writing, Religion and Democracy*, ed. Asli Ü. Bâli and Hanna Lerner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 240, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781107707443>.

17. "Aqeel," "Echoing Jinnah's Vision for Religious Minorities."

## Liaquat Ali Khan's Period and Religious Minorities

The Objectives Resolution submitted in the assembly by prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan on March 12, 1949, stated:

*Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed ... Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to freely profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures.*<sup>18</sup>

Sri Chandra Chattopadhyaya, a Hindu member of the assembly, said:

*... we had an idea that the constitution would be based on the eternal principles of equality, democracy, and social justice. We thought that religion and politics would not be mixed up. That was the declaration of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in this House.*

Bhupendra Kumar Dutta, another Constituent Assembly member, said:

*I feel – I have every reason to believe – that were this resolution to come before this House within the lifetime of the great creator of Pakistan, the Quaid-e-Azam, it would not have come in its present shape.*

In 1950, Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan struck an agreement, Nehru-Liaquat Pack, to fairly treat minorities on each side. However, in this deteriorating situation, law and labour minister Mandal secretly fled to India and tendered his resignation in October. He alleged that atrocities committed in Bengal against Scheduled Caste Hindus were not being effectively addressed.<sup>19</sup> Khan responded to the media that "*Mandal has now openly aligned himself with Hindu militant organizations in West Bengal (India) who seek to bring about war between India and Pakistan*".<sup>20</sup>

## Creating New Constitution for Pakistan and Minorities

The question of religious liberty and equal citizenship of Hindus, Christians and other minorities turned into a sensitive one.

The Constituent Assembly set up a 24-member Basic Principles Committee in 1949 to give suggestions for Pakistan's constitution. Abu A'la Maududi, the founder of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), was among the members of the committee. In a meeting in January 1953, Maududi argued "*that a religious group known as the Ahmediyya ... should be relegated to a separate list of 'non-Muslim' legislative seats*". There were riots shortly after this demand.

It was in this context that the second prime minister of Pakistan, Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din, from the Bengal province, asked to revisit Mr Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech:

*I do not agree that religion is a private affair of the individual nor do I agree that in an Islamic state every citizen has identical rights ... The speech of the Quaid-e-Azam must be interpreted in the context in which it was delivered.*

Golam Wahed Choudhury, a renowned Pakistani diplomat commonly known as G W Choudhury, in his 1955 article *Constitution-Making Dilemmas in Pakistan*, notes that the *Ulema* (religious leaders) could not be brushed aside because they were “*sometimes capable of producing mass agitation and movements such as that which took place in West Punjab in 1953*”. He further notes:

*According to the leading ulema, the position of non-Muslims in the Islamic state of Pakistan will be that of dhimmis and they will not be full citizens of Pakistan because they will not have the same rights as Muslims. They will have no voice in the making of the law, no right to administer the law and no right to hold public offices.*

The Christians in West Pakistan wanted the separate electorate system (and were supported by Maududi) and filed a constitutional petition in the Supreme Court of Pakistan but lost. The Hindus, on the other hand, in East Pakistan demanded the joint electorate system. The 1956 Constitution was put in force on March 23 without deciding this aspect. Pakistan was declared an “Islamic Republic” in the constitution. President Iskander Mirza on October 7, 1958 abrogated the constitution and declared martial law.

## Ayub Khan's period and Minorities

Mirza appointed Ayub Khan as the chief martial law administrator. In 1960, Khan appointed a commission to probe, among many other things, whether separate electorate or joint electorate was suitable for the country. The commission submitted that Upper Caste Hindus desired the joint electoral system under the influence of their relatives in India: “*Their demand for a joint electorate seems clearly to be for some ulterior purpose other than the welfare of Pakistan*”<sup>21</sup>. The Constitution adopted the name of the country as “Republic of Pakistan” but in December 1963, it added the word “Islamic” through a constitutional amendment.

In 1965, Pakistan and India had a war over the longstanding issue of Kashmir. Some members of minorities, including Christians, were accused of espionage for India (without any proven charge).<sup>22</sup>

In 1970, a book titled “*The Turkish Art of Love in Pictures,*” was published in Britain, which contained blasphemous pictures. In violent protests by students in Pakistan, several churches were vandalised by the mobs. This implies that Pakistani Christians have long been associated with the West and used as a scapegoat to give vent to their anger.

There was another war between both countries in 1971 and again Christians and other minorities were accused of spying for India without any proof. Singha's son DP Singh told an English magazine in 1971:

*It has become a fashion in West Pakistan to accuse Christians of espionage and they are being told to migrate to other countries, particularly Canada and the United States.*

The Indian involvement also strengthened the Pakistani belief that religious identity was the only way to ensure national unity in the face of foreign conspiracies.

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21. Donald Eugene Smith, *South Asian Politics and Religion*, 1st Edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

22. Patricia Jeffery, *Migrants and Refugees: Muslim and Christian Pakistani Families in Bristol*, 1st Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), [https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Migrants\\_and\\_Refugees.html?id=6wBYUIDcYcAC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp\\_read\\_button&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/Migrants_and_Refugees.html?id=6wBYUIDcYcAC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false).

## Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Period and Religious Minorities

In February 1971, Yahya Khan appointed Arthur Robert Cornelius, a Christian jurist, and GW Choudhary to draft a new constitution. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then foreign minister, however, objected, saying: “*He is a Dhimmi. How can he make a constitution for a Muslim state?*”<sup>23</sup> Cornelius tendered his resignation after this objection. This was despite the fact that Cornelius had been regarded as one of the most respected chief justices in Pakistan's entire judicial history. Chief Justice Shahabuddin once commented that Justice AR Cornelius was 'more Muslim than a Muslim'. Cornelius also referred to himself as a 'Constitutional Muslim' but this all did not prove of any importance.

From the 1960s, there were voices to nationalise Christian missionary educational institutions and expel foreign missionaries.<sup>24</sup> Maulana Kausar Niazi, a powerful member in Bhutto's cabinet, raised objections on the Christian faith in his Urdu book *The Mirror of Trinity* (آئینہ تثلیث) and proposed that “*Christianity was a great danger to Pakistan and the only way to eliminate this danger was for the government to take over educational institutions in order to render the community helpless.*”<sup>25</sup>

In September 1972, Bhutto, then president of Pakistan, nationalised Christian schools. On August 30, a procession of Christians in Rawalpindi marched towards the Governor's House to submit a memorandum against this injustice. The police opened fire on the procession, instantly killing two Christians – Nawaz Masih and RM James – and arrested many others. Next day, two adjournment motions were moved in the National Assembly “*to discuss the unwarranted firing on peaceful Christian demonstrators resulting in the deaths and injuries to innocent citizens in Rawalpindi*”. The motions were ruled out stating:

*These two adjournment motion notices of which have been given by Ch. Zahur Illahi and Mr Amirzada Khan are ruled out of order, first because it is a provincial matter; secondly, because a judicial enquiry is going on in the matter; Certain persons have been arrested and the case is going to a court of law, and the matter is Sub-Judice.*<sup>26</sup>

After the cessation of East Pakistan, the third constitution was drafted and enforced in 1973. This constitution provided for the joint electoral system. In 1974, there were anti-Ahmadi riots after which they were declared non-Muslim through the Second Constitutional Amendment. In 1975, the Fourth Constitutional Amendment provided six seats for religious minorities, including Ahmadis, in the National Assembly. This move bound Ahmadis and non-Muslims into one category.

During this time, Bhutto closed down nightclubs, changed the weekly holiday from Sunday to Friday, and banned liquor to pacify religious leaders. Negative remarks against non-Muslim faiths in textbooks were added during this period.

Dr. Robina Saigol notes that “*Radical changes in the construction of the Other of the Muslim Self as negative, began to appear in the textbooks of the early phase of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's period.*”

According to Dr Imdad Hussain of Forman Christian College University, the act of parliament titled “*Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education 1976*”<sup>27</sup> conferred powers on the Curriculum Wing in Islamabad “*to check that no textbook could be published in Pakistan carrying material not in conformity with Islamic ideology*”.<sup>28</sup>

23. Ralph J. D. Braibanti and A. R. Cornelius, Chief Justice Cornelius of Pakistan: An Analysis with Letters and Speeches (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18.

24. Pauline A. Brown, Jars of Clay: Ordinary Christians on an Extraordinary Mission in Southern Pakistan, 1st Edition (South Hadley: Doorlight Publications, 2006), <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=uzRmp2Y1ZMYC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

25. Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses, News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean (South Asia: Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses., 1972).

26. Karamat Hussain Niazi, “Rulings of the Chair” (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2008), <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/Ruling-Web.pdf>.

27. National Assembly Secretariat, “Act X of 1976” (The Gazette of Pakistan, 1976), [http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1493188192\\_903.pdf](http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1493188192_903.pdf).

28. “Center for Public Policy and Governance, “Is Islamization Persisting in Pakistani Education? An Institutional Analysis,” Organizations Website, Talks and Interviews (blog), 2011, <http://cppg.fccollege.edu.pk/is-islamization-persisting-in-pakistani-education-an-institutional-analysis/>.

## Zia-ul-Haq's Period and Minorities

All the steps taken by Bhutto could not appease Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) protestors who wanted the implementation of *Nizam-e-Mustafa* – an Islamic system of governance. On July 4, 1977, General Zia-ul-Haq took power through a coup d'état and dismissed the Bhutto government. Haq suspended the constitution, imposed martial law and banned political parties, except religious ones such as the JI.

Haq announced that religious minorities could not expect an equal status.<sup>29</sup> He introduced Hudood Ordinances that punish adultery with public stoning to death or whipping,<sup>30</sup> and whipping for gambling, liquor consumption and other vices.<sup>31</sup>

In September 1978, Haq amended election laws to create separate electoral rolls for Muslims and non-Muslims. He increased the six seats for minorities in the National Assembly to 10. (The general elections of 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993 and 1997 were held under the separate electorate system.)

The introduction of the separate electoral system particularly brought in the Christian clergy in politics. Catholic priests like Father Derek Misquitta and Father Rufian Julius became politicians and most of the protests in the 1980s and 90s against the state were organized by clergymen like Catholic Bishop John Joseph. Unfortunately, the clergy, unlike Christian politicians SP Singha, handled political issues with a religious dogmatic frame of mind, which was not free of its own consequences.

On November 21, 1979, false news spread that the US had bombed the holiest site in Mecca (actually a few Muslims had besieged the site). In retaliation, Christian institutes and churches were attacked and damaged in Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi. Catholic Bishop Pereira wrote to President Zia-ul-Haq that “*Christians will no longer feel safe and secure. They will feel that international events, which have nothing to do with Christians or their institutions, will be used as an excuse to harass and harm them.*”

In 1980, Haq established the Federal Shariat Court (FSC), to “*examine and decide the question whether or not any law or provision of law is repugnant to the injunctions of Islam*”.<sup>32</sup> A non-Muslim lawyer could not appear before this court.

From then onwards, Zia introduced several anti-blasphemy laws that arose from religious discussions going on among the Pakistani Muslims, but these laws later greatly impacted the Christian community.

In 1980, Section 298-A was introduced to make it a crime to speak ill against the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the first four caliphs known as Khulfa-e-Rashdeen. This section intended to check the sectarian divide between Shi'ites and Sunnis as it was the time when the Iranian influence was increasing in Pakistan after the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution.<sup>33</sup>

The Haq regime included Sections 298-B and 298-C in the penal code, forbidding Ahmadis from using any visible symbol that could give a sense that they were Muslims. Another section, 298-A, forbids Ahmadis from calling themselves Muslims.

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29. Ahmed Salim, *Role of Minorities in Nation Building with Focus on Karachi*, 1st Edition (Karachi: Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan, 2006).

30. President of Pakistan, “The Offence of Zina (Enforcement Of Hudood) Ordinance, 1979.” (The Gazette of Pakistan, 1979), [http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia\\_po\\_1979/ord7\\_1979.html](http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia_po_1979/ord7_1979.html).

31. “President of Pakistan, “The Prohibition (Enforcement Of Hadd) Order, 1979.”, Presidents Order No. 4 of 1979 § (1979), [http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia\\_po\\_1979/po4\\_1979.html](http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia_po_1979/po4_1979.html).

32. The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, “Constitution of Pakistan: Chapter 3A: Federal Shariat Court of Part VII: The Judicature” (The Gazette of Pakistan, 1980), <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/part7.ch3A.html>.

33. Andreas Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan: An Assertive and Beleaguered Minority* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

In 1983, Mushtaq Raj, a lawyer of Lahore High Court, wrote a defamatory book<sup>34</sup> after which Muhammad Ismail Qureshi, another lawyer, submitted a petition in the FSC to introduce the death penalty in the anti-blasphemy laws. While Qureshi's petition was pending, in July 1984, a famous human rights lawyer – Asma Jehangir – was accused of irresponsibly speaking in a meeting in Islamabad.<sup>35</sup> After this row, former interior minister Ahsan Iqbal's mother Appa Nisar Fatima, who was a member of the National Assembly, tabled a bill that proposed Section 295-C of Pakistan Penal Code in 1986. Section 295-C provided for both the death penalty and life imprisonment.

While elections were held and a new parliament had been elected, Haq introduced The Revival of Constitution of 1973 Order on March 2, 1985. He introduced many clauses in the Constitution. Among them, he made the Objectives Resolution part of the constitution and also removed the word “freely” from the following statement:

*“Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to <freely> profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures.”<sup>36</sup>*

## Restoration of Democratic Government and Minorities

Gen Haq died in a plane crash in August 1988 after which the democratic rule was restored. Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif tried to introduce the Enforcement of Shari'ah Act, 1991,<sup>37</sup> which could not be materialised.

In 1991, the FSC, while deciding several petitions, including Qureshi's plea, struck down the life imprisonment from Section 295-C, holding that only death was the appropriate punishment for blasphemy.

In 1992, when the Babri Mosque was demolished in India, there were countrywide protests in Pakistan. Many of these protests were violent and roughly 1,000 temples in Pakistan were ransacked or demolished.<sup>38</sup>

In October 1992, the Sharif government decided that religious affiliation would be indicated in national identity cards. Regarding this move, the Roman Catholic international journal Concilium notes:

*“The government explained that this was meant especially to identify Ahmadis (a sect considered heretical by the orthodox), as their names are similar to Muslims. Though the column was intended to mark the Ahmadis, it in fact affects the Christians as well ... The minorities, but especially the Christian community, did their best to have the government reverse this decision”<sup>39</sup>*

34. Joint Publications Research Service and Foreign Broadcast Information Service, “Near East/South Asia Report, Issue 84021” (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 1984).

35. Khaled Ahmed, “Hand out Blinkers for Blasphemy Law,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, February 4, 2011, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/113997/hand-out-blinkers-for-blasphemy-law/>.

36. Ardeshir Cowasjee, “The Sole Statesman - 4,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, July 9, 2000, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072307>.

37. “Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament), “Enforcement of Shariah Act, 1991,” ACT X OF 1991 § (1991), <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/1991/actXof1991.html>.

38. Raza Rumi, “The Hindus of Pakistan,” The Friday Times, October 3, 2014, <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/the-hindus-of-pakistan/>.

39. Norbert Greinacher and Norbert Mette, Christianity and Cultures: A Mutual Enrichment, vol. 2 (Glen Rock, N.J.: SCM Press, 1994).

Bishop Joseph and several other Catholic and Protestant priests vehemently opposed the religious column. The Economic Review of Pakistan noted:

*“The decision to sectarianise the national identity card was made at a meeting chaired by Maulana Abdul Sattar Niazi, the Minister for Religious Affairs, its members included the Federal Minister of Interior, other officials, Ulema, and Mashaikh. Not one member of the minority community was present. When queried over leaving the minority community out of such an important decision affecting their future, the Maulana replied: ‘I did not need to consult minorities since Pakistan had been established on the basis of Islam’”*<sup>40</sup>

*“Another reasoning of Maulana Niazi was that the minorities did not struggle for Pakistan, therefore, they should not demand equal rights in this country,”*<sup>41</sup> Economic Review of 1992 noted.

MG Chitkara in his book Human Rights in Pakistan writes:

*Addressing a press conference at Lahore, Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi ... said that if the Christians did not like having a separate Identity Card showing their religion as Christians, they were welcome to renounce Christianity and embrace Islam ... Similarly, Mr. Hamza, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, describing Christians as agents of Ahmadis.*

In another media report from that period, *“Maulana Niazi said that Quadianis very cleverly challenged the religion column and involved the Christians and other minorities to further their ulterior motives”*.

In 1997, a Christian village, Shantinagar in district Khanewal, was set on fire on the accusation of blasphemy. One respondent to our survey from Khanewal said that the Shantinagar incident had some relation to the strikes that Christians had organised back in 1992 to halt the government from introducing a religion column in the ID card. The ID card movement and burning of Shantinagar have become landmark incidents in the history of these communities.

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40. The Commission, HRCP Newsletter: A Quarterly Publication of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, vol. 4 (Lahore: Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 1993).

41. Economic & Industrial Publications, Economic Review: Pakistan, vol. 23(7-12) (Economic & Industrial Publications, 1992).



**Parsee Graveyard in Rawalpindi being allegedly encroached**

# CHAPTER FOUR

## REDISCOVERING JINNAH'S INCLUSIVE PAKISTAN

Since the start of the millennium, Pakistan has been in the limelight for various reasons, including terrorism, economic meltdown and persecution of religious minorities. However, since then, several positive developments have also taken place for religious minorities that need to be noted here.

### Religious Minorities and Global Trends

Although over the last two decades, there were dozens, if not hundreds, of attacks on their neighbourhoods and worship places, the good news is that there was no legislation to curtail their religious freedom.

Christian schools and churches were targeted after sacrilegious caricatures were published in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in 2006.<sup>42</sup> Christian neighbourhoods of Gojra (2009) and Joseph Colony (2013) were looted, ransacked and then set on fire on the pretext of blasphemy. In 2012, anti-Islam film protestors set a church on fire in Mardan.

Terrorists exploited these social fault lines around religion and targeted Christian (mostly Protestant) institutions and worship places.

On March 23, 2017, PML-N leader Shahbaz Sharif, then chief minister of Punjab, wrote an article titled “*When the Past is the Future*” on Pakistan Day. Referring to Mr Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech, he wrote: “*An egalitarian, tolerant, and peaceful polity where non-Muslim minorities enjoy religious freedoms and a complete sense of security is the answer to all our challenges.*”<sup>43</sup>

Prime Minister Imran Khan who heads Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) tweeted on December 25, 2018:

*Quaid envisaged Pakistan as a democratic, just and compassionate nation. Most importantly he wanted our minorities to be equal citizens. It should be remembered that his early political career was as an ambassador for Hindu-Muslim unity.*<sup>44</sup>

Khan on 29 July, 2019, while addressing a Minority Day event, said:

*Pakistan was not created to remove the Hindu elite in these areas and install a Muslim elite ... how can we forcibly convert to Islam as many do by marrying (Hindu) women in Sindh? How can we force people to convert at the gunpoint or beat people because of their religious affiliation? This all is not Islamic ... Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah did not say anything new on August 11, 1947. Jinnah only spoke according to the tradition (Hadith) of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).*

42. International Christian Response, “Cartoon Protestors in Pakistan Target Christians,” News & Reporting, International Christian Response, August 23, 2006, <https://web.archive.org/web/20060823150650/http://www.christianresponse.org/articles/291/cartoon-protestors-in-pakistan-target-christians>.

43. Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, “When the Past Is the Future,” News, Feature and Opinion, The News, March 23, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/194011-When-the-past-is-the-future>.

44. Imran Khan, “Quaid Envisaged Pakistan as a Democratic, Just and Compassionate Nation. Most Importantly He Wanted Our Minorities to Be Equal Citizens. It Should Be Remembered That His Early Political Career Was as an Ambassador for Hindu Muslim Unity,” Social Media Site, Twitter (blog), December 25, 2018, [https://twitter.com/imrankhanpti/status/1077477942937223169?ref\\_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.dawn.com%2fnews%2f1453520](https://twitter.com/imrankhanpti/status/1077477942937223169?ref_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.dawn.com%2fnews%2f1453520).

In November 2019, in a historic move, Khan inaugurated the Kartarpur Corridor between India and Pakistan. It is the site where Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, settled and assembled the Sikh community. As a goodwill gesture, the Pakistani government has allowed Sikh pilgrims from India to visit the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib without a visa.<sup>45</sup>

On December 25, 2019, Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, went to the Christ Church in Rawalpindi and attended the Christmas mass.<sup>46</sup>

In 2015, Nawaz Sharif became the first Pakistani prime minister to attend a Diwali program. While addressing the ceremony, he called himself the “*prime minister of all religious communities*.”<sup>47</sup> Again, in 2017, Sharif attended a Holi program and gave a historic address:

*“Some people have been using religion to create divides. For this purpose they use Islam ... It is not up to us to decide whether one will go to heaven or hell, but to make this place a heaven on earth ... Pakistan was not made so one religion can dominate over others Pakistan's creation itself was a struggle against religious oppression... Islam does not support religious coercion or forcible conversion ... Pakistan's creation itself was a struggle against religious oppression.”<sup>48</sup>*

## Positive Developments since General Musharraf and Onwards

### Political Participation

The credit for this opening up towards religious minorities goes to Gen Musharraf. He raised the slogan of “Pakistan First” and “Enlightened Moderation” and wrote in the *Washington Post* that he meant to shun “*militancy and extremism and adopt the path of socioeconomic uplift*”.<sup>49</sup>

In 2002, Musharraf, while maintaining the status of Ahmadis, brought religious minorities back into mainstream politics. The separate seats for religious minorities were retained as additional reserved seats in all assemblies which are now given to the winning parties through a proportionate representation in the assembly. Mainstreaming of religious minorities through this change is obvious from the fact that more than 20 Hindus contested the 2018 elections on general seats in Sindh, one won in the National Assembly and two in the provincial assembly.

### Minorities in Government

In the current political setup, Shunila Ruth (Christian), elected on a reserved seat, is the federal parliamentary secretary. Mukesh Kumar Chawala (Upper Caste Hindu) is the minister of excise, taxation and narcotics in Sindh with an additional portfolio of parliamentary affairs. Ejaz Augustine (Christian), elected on a reserved seat, is the human rights and minority affairs minister in Punjab while Hari Ram (Upper Caste Hindu) is the Minister for Minority Affairs and Food in the Sindh government. Mahinder Pal Singh (Sikh) is a parliamentary secretary in the Punjab Assembly. Dr Khatoomal (Scheduled Caste Hindu) is a special assistant to the Sindh Chief Minister on Supply and Price Control while Veerji Kohli (Scheduled Caste Hindu) is also a special assistant to the Sindh Chief Minister.

45. Naveed Siddiqui and Dawn.com, “This Is the Beginning: PM Imran Inaugurates Kartarpur Corridor on Historic Day,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, November 9, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1515830>.

46. Asif Aqeel, “A Christmas in a Remarkably Different Mood,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, December 29, 2017, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/170081/christmas-remarkably-different-mood/>.

47. Habib Khan Ghorri, “PM Vows to Protect Rights of All Religious Communities,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, November 12, 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1219105>.

48. Kunwar Khuldune Shahid, “Nawaz Sharif's Historic Holi Address,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Diplomat, March 16, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/nawaz-sharifs-historic-holi-address/>.

49. Pervez Musharraf, “A Plea for Enlightened Moderation,” *Washington Post*, June 1, 2004, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2004/06/01/a-plea-for-enlightened-moderation/b01ff08e-f0c5-4ad5-8e96-b97a32ec084e/>.

The Senate has 100 seats and four additional seats for religious minorities. Kamran Michael (Christian), Brigadier (r) John Kenneth Williams (Christian), Dr Ashok Kumar (Upper Caste Hindu), and Hari Ram (Upper Caste Hindu) occupy these seats. Gian Chand (Scheduled Caste) is elected on a general seat while Krishna Kumari (Scheduled Caste) was inducted on a women's seat. [Kumari criticises the term “Dalit” while Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari takes pride in bringing the first Dalit woman to the Senate.]<sup>50</sup>

In the last government, Kamran Michael was the federal minister for human rights and ports and shipping while Khalil Tahir Sandhu was the minister for human rights and minority affairs in Punjab.

Former Kinnaird College principal Dr Mira Phailbus was appointed Punjab ombudswoman. She also served as the minister for education and minority affairs in the Punjab interim governments. Similarly, Dr Sarah Safdar was made minister for education in the last interim government in KP.

Late Shahbaz Bhatti is most prominent among all non-Muslim politicians who was federal minister for minority affairs during the PPP regime. He was assassinated by suspected Taliban militants in March 2011.

## Education and/for Minorities

Gen Musharraf denationalised Christian educational institutions Bhutto had nationalised in 1972. The prestigious Forman Christian College (now a chartered university) was a stronghold of JI but Musharraf evicted it from the campus and handed it back to the church in 2006.

In 2012, the University of Peshawar announced seats for minorities. The Quaid-e-Azam University, the University of Gujrat, the Government College University and the Lahore College for Women University are also providing additional seats to religious minorities. However, there is a need to provide additional seats to minorities in medical and engineering colleges and other institutions of higher learning.

The Punjab government told the Supreme Court in December 2014 that “*students will learn they are 'different worshippers of a peaceful God'. They will learn to act upon the dictum 'Love God and your neighbour'*”<sup>51</sup>. So far these aspects are to be incorporated in the textbooks.

In addition to these developments, the Lahore College for Women University has created the Guru Nanak Chair.

## Celebrating Religious Festivals of Minorities

The Pakistani government announces holidays for minority communities. For example, in Sindh there are holidays for Hindus on Holi and Diwali. December 25 is an official holiday on account of the birth of Mr Jinnah and Easter falls on Sunday. So, Christian holidays are somewhat vague. On the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, Kartarpur Corridor between India and Pakistan was opened. A commemorative ticket and a coin were issued. Similarly, Baba Guru Nanak University (BGNU) is under construction in district Nanaka Sahib. In 2016, a Christmas Amman (Peace) Train, decorated with Christmas symbols, was launched to promote acceptance of other religious minorities.<sup>52</sup>

50. Surendar Valasai, “#PPP Raising Dashed Hopes among Most Vulnerable. Nominations of Krishna Kumari, a #Dalit Woman and Anwar Laldean, a #Christian Worker for the Senate Makes PPP the Torchbearer of an Egalitarian #Pakistan. Thank You Chairman @BBhuttoZardari #ThisHappensOnlyInPPP <https://t.co/WUZwwQOVgw>,” Tweet, Twitter, February 10, 2018, <https://twitter.com/SurendarValasai/status/962240521166053376>.

51. Hasnaat Malik, “Promoting Tolerance: Punjab Proposes a Minority Friendly Curriculum,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, December 16, 2014, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/807342/promoting-tolerance-punjab-proposes-a-minority-friendly-curriculum/>.

52. Associated Press of Pakistan, “Kamran Michael Welcomes Christmas Amman Train at Lahore,” News & Reporting, Associated Press Of Pakistan, December 24, 2016, <https://www.app.com.pk/kamran-michael-welcomes-christmas-amman-train-at-lahore/>.

## Recognizing the Role of Minorities in Nation Building

Pakistani Parsees and Christians have particularly played an important role in nation building. German-Pakistani Catholic nun Ruth Pfau, who almost single-handedly fought against leprosy across the country, was donned with several state awards. She died in August 2017 and was given a state funeral. The government renamed two hospitals – Fazaia Ruth Medical College and Civil Hospital in Karachi – in recognition of her services to Pakistan. The Lahore College for Women University renamed its Women Institute of Leadership and Learning (WILL) in honour of Dr Ruth Pfau. Also, the Lahore Medical and Dental College, a private institution, renamed its one school as Ruth Pfau College of Nutrition Sciences.<sup>53</sup>

In 2016, President Mamnoon Hussein lauded the services of SP Singha by launching a commemorative stamp.<sup>54</sup> In February 2020, the Punjab Human Rights and Minority Affairs Ministry introduced a book on non-Muslim heroes.

## Judicial Activism and Minorities

The Supreme Court announced a judgment on June 19, 2014, in which it demanded the government to take the following steps:

1. Constitute a federal task force at a federal level to develop a strategy for promoting religious tolerance.
2. Develop appropriate curricula for primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education that promote religious harmony and tolerance.
3. Curb hatred on social media.
4. Constitute a national council for minorities.
5. Establish a special police force to protect the worship places of minorities.
6. Enforce the five per cent minority quota in government jobs.
7. Prompt action, including registration of a criminal case, whenever constitutional rights of religious minorities are violated or their worship places are desecrated.<sup>55</sup>

However, there hasn't been much progress in this regard compelling the Supreme Court to form the Shoaib Suddle Commission for its implementation.<sup>56</sup>

The most courageous step taken by the judiciary and the current government was the acquittal of Christian blasphemy convict Asia Bibi in October 2018. Bibi had been languishing in jail for over eight years and there was huge international pressure on Pakistan to release her.

The Supreme Court also took *suo motu* notice in the Christian couple burning case. In 2014, Shahzad and his wife Shama were burned alive in a brick kiln in Kot Radha Kishan for allegedly committing blasphemy.

The Supreme Court also took notice of the deteriorating condition of the UCH, though nothing substantive came out of it.

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53 Lahore Medical & Dental College, "Ruth Pfau College of Nutrition Sciences," Institutional Website, Lahore Medical & Dental College LMDC, accessed December 31, 2019, <http://www.lmdc.edu.pk/ruth-pfau-college-of-nutrition-sciences/>.

54. Associated Press of Pakistan, "President Lauds Services of Dewan Bahadur SP Singha," News, Feature and Opinion, Pakistan Today, April 30, 2016, <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/04/30/president-lauds-services-of-dewan-bahadur-sp-singha/>.

55. Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, Sh. Azmat Saeed, and Mushir Alam, "S.M.C. NO. 1 OF 2014" (Supreme Court of Pakistan, June 19, 2014), [https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads\\_judgements/smc\\_1\\_2014.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads_judgements/smc_1_2014.pdf).

56. Correspondent, "Dr Suddle Commission Meets on Minorities Rights," News, Feature and Opinion, The News, February 1, 2019, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/426217-dr-suddle-commission-meets-on-minorities-rights>.

## Renovation of Worship Places

Several churches, Hindu temples and Sikh gurdwaras have been renovated and constructed in the last 10 years. Out of the major 400 Hindu temples, only nine are functional but the government is now planning to renovate them.<sup>57</sup> A Hindu temple has already been renovated in Hyderabad's cantonment area. Since 2006, Pakistan has been renovating the Katas Raj, one of the most historic Hindu temples. Former chief justice Saqib Nisar commented: *“This temple is not just a place of cultural significance for the Hindu community, but also a part of our national heritage. We have to protect it.”*<sup>58</sup> Complete restoration of the temple is yet to take place.

## Speaking for Minorities

Governor of Punjab Salmaan Taseer (assassinated in 2011) and many others have been quite vocal in their support for religious minorities. During tensions with India, Punjab Information Minister Fayyaz-ul-Hassan Chohan made an offensive remark against Hindus in March 2019. His comments drew public flak and resulted in his removal from the post, which was an unprecedented act. However, he has been reappointed to the same position now.

## Safety of Religious Minorities

In the wake of incessant terror attacks in the previous years, the government has been providing security to churches and Christian educational institutions because among minorities, Christians were the prime target. On December 16, 2014, terrorists attacked the Army Public School in Peshawar and killed 146 people, including 132 school children. After the incident, a national consensus in the form of the National Action Plan was developed. One of the 20 points is *“Taking effective steps against religious persecution”*.<sup>59</sup>

## Economic Uplift: Access to Government Jobs

The PPP introduced the job quota for religious minorities in 2009. Since then it has been adopted by all four provinces and hundreds of minority candidates have benefited from it.

Gen Musharraf also played an important role in the recruitment of religious minorities. He, for the first time, allowed recruitment of Hindus and Sikhs in the Pakistan Army. Danesh from Umar Kot was the first Hindu to be recruited in the army in 2006.<sup>60</sup> Hercharan Singh was the first Sikh commissioned officer.<sup>61</sup>

The induction of Gulab Singh as a traffic warden drew a lot of public attention as Sikhs wear a turban.

In 2018, the Sindh government appointed the first Christian Attorney General Salman Talibuddin.<sup>62</sup> There are several Hindus serving abroad as diplomats.

57. Asif Mehmood, “Govt to Restore, Reopen Historic Hindu Temples,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, April 10, 2019, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1947544/1-govt-restore-reopen-historic-hindu-temples/>.

58. Haseeb Bhatti, “Katas Raj Case: Will Halt Water Supply to Cement Factories If Necessary, Says CJP,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, November 23, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1372370>.

59. National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan, “National Action Plan, 2014,” Organizations Website, National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan, 2014, <https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/>.

60. PTI, “Pak Army Recruits First Hindu Cadet,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Times of India, September 25, 2006, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/Pak-army-recruits-first-Hindu-cadet/articleshow/2023276.cms>.

61. Ejaz Mehar, پاک فوج کا پہلا سکھ افسر, News, Feature and Opinion, BBC, December 20, 2005, [https://www.bbc.com/urdu/pakistan/story/2005/12/printable/051220\\_sikh\\_army\\_an.shtml](https://www.bbc.com/urdu/pakistan/story/2005/12/printable/051220_sikh_army_an.shtml).

62. SAMAA and Sanjay Kumar, “Sindh Appoints First Christian Advocate General,” News & Reporting, Samaa TV, September 15, 2018, <https://www.samaa.tv/news/2018/09/sindh-appoints-first-christian-advocate-general/>.

## Minimizing the Misuse of Blasphemy Laws

After several reports on the misuse of the blasphemy laws, particularly against religious minorities, several efforts have been made, though unsuccessful, to curb their misuse. A Senate committee was set up to review the misuse of the laws in 2017.<sup>63</sup>

## Personal Laws of Religious Minorities

In the last government (2013-2018), the federal legislature adopted the Hindu Marriage Act. But one and half centuries old Christian personal laws could not be reformed because of two Christian ministers: federal minister for human rights Kamran Michael and former Punjab human rights and minority affairs minister Khalil Tahir Sandhu.<sup>64</sup> The incumbent Federal Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazari, however, has introduced the Christian Marriage and Divorce Bill 2019. Further progress is awaited on it.

The Punjab government passed the 'Anand Karaj Marriages Act 2017, the first Sikh marriage laws in the world.<sup>65</sup> The Pakistan government has yet to make these laws applicable because the lack of rules of business means they are not applicable.

## August 11: Minorities National Day

In 2009, the PPP designated August 11 as the National Minorities' Day due to the efforts of the late Shahbaz Bhatti.<sup>66</sup>

## Eighteenth Amendment and Minorities

Gen Zia-ul-Haq had removed the word “freely” from the Objectives Resolution in Article 2 of the Constitution of Pakistan. The PPP legislated the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010 and restored the word “freely” in the following statement:

*“Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to freely profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures”*

The 18th Amendment also provided four reserved seats in the Senate for minorities.

The amendment, however, introduced a rule in Article 91 of the Constitution of Pakistan that the prime minister could only be a Muslim. It is ironic that only three years later, on Christmas Day in 2013, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari tweeted:

*#MerryChristmas 2 all followers of Hazrat Essa around the world & particularly in Pakistan. I want 2 see a Christian PM of PK in my lifetime.<sup>67</sup>*

63. Mehreen Zahra-Malik, “Pakistani Senate Group to Debate How to Prevent Misuse of Blasphemy Laws,” Reuters, January 12, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-pakistan-blasphemy-idUSKBN14W2FB>.

64. Shahzada Irfan Ahmed, “Divorced from Reality,” News, Feature and Opinion, The News on Sunday, February 5, 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/562653-divorced-reality>.

65. Sana Jamal, “Pakistan: Punjab Assembly Passes Sikh Marriages Bill,” News & Reporting, Gulf News, March 14, 2018, <https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/pakistan-punjab-assembly-passes-sikh-marriages-bill-1.2188224>.

66. Kaleem Dean, “The National Minorities Day: A Mere Formality?,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, August 10, 2016, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/64438/the-national-minorities-day-a-mere-formality/>.

67. Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, “#MerryChristmas 2 All Followers of Hazrat Essa around the World & Particularly in Pakistan. I Want 2 See a Christian PM of PK in My Lifetime.” Tweet, Twitter, December 25, 2013, <https://twitter.com/bhuttozardari/status/415761868511531008>.

## When Muslims Saved Non-Muslims and the Babri Mosque Verdict

In most of the reported instances of violence against religious minorities, stories of the brave Muslims who had come forward to protect their minority brethren failed to get a mention in the national press. Only two such stories are briefly touched there.

In August 2015, a Christian man, Parvaiz Masih, was accused of blasphemy after he had a fight with his co-workers regarding some dues. Two weeks after the incident, about 200 men smashed his door and demanded that Masih be handed over to them. *“Two local Muslims, Chaudhry Majeed Kamboh and Sardar Intizar Dogar, however, told them that they could approach or harm the Christians only over their [Kamboh and Dogar's] dead bodies, after which no one came near them”*.<sup>68</sup>

In 1992, after the Babri Mosque was demolished in Ayodhya, India, hundreds of temples were attacked, set on fire or demolished in Pakistan.

Jawaharlal Advani, a Hindu, recalls that he and others were worshipping in a temple in Karachi on December 6 *“when a charged Muslim mob, calling for revenge, was marching towards the country's famous Shri Swami Narayan temple.”* He recalled, *“It was a horrific scene. Thousands of charged people were trying to enter the temple premises. But thanks to the army and local Muslim community that helped and held them off”*.<sup>69</sup>

On November 9, 2019, the Supreme Court of India ruled that the Indian government will build the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple at the site of the Babri Mosque. However, not a single temple or Hindu settlement was touched by Muslims in Pakistan in retaliation. Rather it was the same time Pakistan celebrated the 550th birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru, Nanak Dev Jee. Hence, there is hope but there is a need to assess the situation on ground, if change is desired.

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68. World Watch Monitor, “Wife Beaten so Badly She Cant Walk, Hes Deep in Debt: Pakistani Christian Freed after 3 Year 'blasphemy Trial,’” News & Reporting, World Watch Monitor (blog), January 29, 2019, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/01/wife-beaten-so-badly-she-cant-walk-and-hes-now-deep-in-debt-pakistani-christian-freed-from-3-year-false-trial-for-blasphemy/>.

69. Aamir Latif, “Memories of Babri Mosque Demolition Haunt Pakistani Hindus,” News & Reporting, Anadolu Agency, December 3, 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/memories-of-babri-mosque-demolition-haunt-pakistani-hindus/1662472>.



**Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Narowal**

# CHAPTER FIVE

## DIVERSE MINORITY FAITHS IN PAKISTAN

*Every time I spoke about the minorities I meant what I said and what I said I meant. Minorities to whichever community they may belong will be safeguarded. Their religion or faith or belief will be secure. There will be no interference of any kind with their freedom of worship. They will have their protection with regard to their religion, faith, their life, their culture.*

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, New Delhi, on July 14, 1947

The Indian subcontinent has a rich religious diversity. It gave birth to four major *dharmic* religions: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. It also absorbed outside religious influences of Zoroastrianism (followers known as Parsees), Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The Jews arrived in India because of invasions of Jerusalem by Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II in 587 BC. For Christianity, it is traditionally believed that Saint Thomas reached India around AD 52 and spread Christianity. Zoroastrians started arriving in India from the 10th century onwards. But among foreign religious influences that reached India, Islam was the most important one.

Towards the end of the seventh century, Arab sailors, traders and conquerors started establishing themselves in northern India and introduced Islam. But it was effectively introduced during the 11th century by the Turks.<sup>70</sup> The Arab and northwest Muslim conquerors were from both Sunni and Shi'ite branches of Islam, but overwhelming majority of them was Sunni while the missionaries who accompanied the Muslim conquerors were mostly inspired by the Sufi belief, which is why they were “*extremely successful in Bengal*”.<sup>71</sup>

The Mughal Empire was founded in 1526 by Zaheer-ud-Din Babur, a warrior from what today is Uzbekistan. The empire lasted in the subcontinent for about two centuries before being ousted by European powers. The British took control of Bengal in the late 18th century and Sindh in 1843. The Sikhs were ruling Punjab until the British took it over in 1849. In 1947, India got independence and Pakistan was carved out of the Indian subcontinent as a homeland for Muslims but it has inherited this millennia-long religious heritage. Following are details of non-Muslim faiths, their unique context, history and culture that exist in Pakistan.

### Hinduism in Pakistan

Hinduism, one of the oldest world religions, was born in the Indus River Valley, which “*covered most of present-day Pakistan*” and flourished from 3300–1300 BC. Interestingly, the terms 'Hindu', 'Hinduism', 'India', 'Indian' and 'Hindi' are derived from the name of the River Indus, also known as the Sindhu, which runs almost throughout Pakistan.

“*Sindhu is a Sanskrit word used by the inhabitants of the region, the Aryans in the second millennium BCE.*”<sup>72</sup> It is believed that Lahore, the capital of Punjab, is named after a son of Lord Rama named Lava, and the adjacent city of Kasur is named after his twin brother Kusha.

70. Areas Studies Division, American University, Area Handbook for Pakistan, 149.

71. Areas Studies Division, American University, 130.

72. BBC, “Hinduism: At a Glance,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, September 29, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/hinduism/ataglance/glance.shtml>.

Some believe that because of the caste system, “one is a born Hindu” while others believe that the core feature of Hinduism is the “impersonal Supreme” and thereby not limited to those born in Hindu families.<sup>73</sup> Most Hindus consider Vedas their sacred scriptures and the teachings drawn as dharma. Brahma, Lakshmi, Vishnu (who took avatars of Rama and Krishna) and Shiva are the most revered gods. Temples are adorned with their statues. The *parshad* is the food that is given (like *langar* in Sikh gurdwaras) after a religious ceremony. Hinglaj Mata Temple (Makran), Kali Mandir (Peshawar), Katas Raj (Kalar Kahar), Sadh Belo (Sukkur) and Krishna Temple (Lahore) are the famous temples in Pakistan.

After Pakistan was created in 1947, hundreds of thousands of Hindus, especially Upper Caste Hindus, migrated to India and hundreds of their temples were left deserted or were seized by local residents.

Hindus, including the Upper Caste and the Scheduled Caste, form the largest minority in Pakistan with more than 1.6 per cent of the population and with 1.77 million voters in 2017.<sup>74</sup> The Hindu community is largely located in the Sindh province. Outside Sindh, most Pakistanis have not met Hindus and continue to interchangeably use the word Hindu with the word Indian.

Hindus speak a variety of languages, including Sindhi, Gujrati, Marwari, Vaghri, Thari, Dhatki and Koli, in Sindh but those living in KP, Punjab and Balochistan also speak their provincial languages. Holi, Diwali, and Raksha Bandhan are their important festivals. Most Upper-Caste Hindus own businesses while Scheduled Caste Hindus are salaried employees. Scheduled Caste women often work in agricultural fields while Upper-Caste women are mostly housewives. Hindu women wear a *bindi*, *mangal sutra* and *sindhur*. Many of the Scheduled Caste Hindus still wear their traditional *ghagra* (full dress which looks like a gown) and *Choor*a (bangles up to upper arms).

Many Pakistani Hindus are vegetarians while some are non-vegetarians but avoid beef. Some of the Scheduled Castes, for example, in Bahawalpur, lead an impoverished life and in difficult times they eat Indian spiny-tailed lizards and wild boars, which are abominable to a majority of Pakistanis.

The Hindu community in Sindh has long been complaining about the forced conversion of their young girls. Until recently, Hindus were migrating to India, especially from the upper caste. The migration trend has, however, slowed down.

Hindus are the most active minority in the political process.

## Scheduled Caste Hindus

The British separately considered the Upper-Caste Hindus and the Scheduled Castes because of their different social, religious and economic status. Article 260(3)(b) of the Constitution and census treat Scheduled Caste Hindus separately from the *Jati* or Upper Caste Hindus; hence, the report looks at them separately.

Scheduled Castes, traditionally known as “Untouchables”, were not allowed to enter the temples of the Upper Caste Hindus. They were forced to live outside the village, take up humiliating occupations like removing dead animals, etc., and were not allowed to eat or drink or even shake hands with people from the upper caste. They were not supposed to accumulate wealth, acquire education, own a weapon, wear decent clothes, or adopt any trade, except service of the upper castes. In India, discrimination, rape and killing of scheduled castes, known as Dalits, is rampant. In 2016 alone, there were 47,338 cases registered of this abuse.<sup>75</sup> Paladugu Parvathi Devi in her doctoral thesis for Acharya Nagarjuna University:

73. BBC

74. Asif Mehmood, “Non-Muslim Voters Increase by 30% in Five-Year Period,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, July 2, 2018, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1747768/1-non-muslim-voters-increase-30-five-year-period/>.

75. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, “Crime Stats Reveal Trend,” News & Reporting, Telegraph in India, April 4, 2018, <https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/crime-stats-reveal-trend/cid/1340822>.

2. Declaration of Scheduled Castes.—The castes of non-Muslims mentioned in the Schedule to this Ordinance are declared to be Scheduled Castes for the purposes of the Constitution within the meaning of Article 204 thereof.

SCHEDULE

(See section 2)

|                    |                    |          |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Ad Dharmi          | Dhed               | Nat      |
| Bangali            | Dumna              | Od       |
| Barar              | Gagra              | Pasi     |
| Bawarin            | Gandhila           | Perma    |
| Buzigar            | Halal-Khur         | Ramdas   |
| Bhangi             | Jatia              | Sansi    |
| Bhanjra            | Kalid              | Sapela   |
| Bhil               | Khatik             | Sarera   |
| Chamar             | Kolli              | Shikari  |
| Chawal             | Kori               | Sirkhand |
| Charan             | Kuchria            | Suchi    |
| Chuhra, or Balmiki | Marija, or Marecha | Wagai    |
| Dagi and Koli      | Mepi               |          |
| Dhank              | Menghwar           |          |

ABDUL WAHAB KHAN,  
*Speaker, exercising the functions  
of the President under Article 36  
of the Constitution,*

EDWARD SNEILSON,  
*Secretary.*

The schedule in the 1956 Constitution of Pakistan names 40 traditionally known untouchable castes; thereby, these castes are called "*the Scheduled Castes*"

*“Untouchability in India, like the racial discrimination in West, rested upon the idea of the superiority of one section of people over others on account of their birth. A Brahmin might be as poor as the untouchables, but he is not ill-treated by our society on that account.”*

The “Untouchables” were totally excluded from social, political and economic life. The British described them as “Depressed Classes” and the India Act 1935, through a schedule, identified dozens; hence, they are described as the “Scheduled Castes”.

Scheduled Castes were the largest minority when Pakistan was created. Most of them chose not to migrate to India. The group adopted a more respectable identity called “Dalit” in India. However, in Pakistan, many of the Scheduled Caste Hindus disapprove of the term. They say that here in Pakistan, there are no Upper Caste Hindus, like in India, who control them so this term was irrelevant. As a matter of fact, they are now welcomed to consider themselves as equals to the Upper Caste Hindus and share the same temples in Pakistan. But still they vary in their performance of the last rites. Upper Caste Hindus cremate while most of the scheduled castes bury their dead. Despite being a tiny minority, the Upper Caste Hindus dominate politics and businesses in Pakistan. It is the Scheduled Caste Hindus who suffer prejudicial treatment in villages and face racial stigmas like being associated with dark colour and forced into menial and bonded labour.

Among the Scheduled Caste Hindus, the Meghwar community is exemplary. They were also disparagingly called “Dhed” meaning those who eat carrion (so were some other scheduled castes given in the schedule of Constitution of 1956 of Pakistan). The Meghwars traditionally used to skin the dead animals and manufacture crude articles with leather. For the past 40 years, they have gradually relinquished the occupation and a significant number of them have attained education and now many of them are doctors, engineers and university professors. Meghwar changed their names for better identities after shifting to cities. They adopted surnames such as “Dewan”, “Roy”, “Rathore”, as several respondents in our study verified. But now this trend is dying. They are bringing dignity to their own Meghwar identity.

## Sikhism in Pakistan

Near the end of the 15th century, the monotheistic tradition of Sikhism was born in Punjab. Baba Guru Nanak was born in a village only 65 kilometres from Lahore in 1469. Sikhism was established as a distinct faith by the time of the fifth Guru Arjun. He established “Amritsar as the capital of the Sikh world” and compiled the Adi Granth, the first Sikh scripture. Sikhs had a troubled history with the Mughal rulers who saw them as a threat to the state.

During Emperor Aurangzeb's period, relations between Sikhs and Mughals deteriorated because he forced them to accept Islam. Aurangzeb had arrested and executed the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur in 1675. The tenth Guru, Gobind Singh, recreated Khalsa (military group of men and women) to enable Sikhs to defend their faith. Singh established the Sikh rite of initiation and the 5Ks, which are physical symbols worn because “the Sikh who wears them has dedicated themselves to a life of devotion and submission to the Guru.” The 5Ks are:

- Kesh (uncut hair)
- Kara (a steel bracelet)
- Kanga (a wooden comb)
- Kaccha - also spelt, Kachh, Kachera (cotton underwear)
- Kirpan (steel sword or dagger)

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76. BBC, “Sikhism: Origins of Sikhism,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, 2009, [https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/history/history\\_1.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/history/history_1.shtml).

77. BBC, “Sikhism: The Five Ks,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, September 29, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/customs/fiveks.shtml>.

After the Gurus, the Sikh khalsa gradually developed into a military force. In 1799, Maharaja Ranjit Singh captured Lahore and established a state in the Punjab province. The British took control of Punjab in 1849 and built a large infrastructure of canals in Punjab and millions of acres of arid land was brought under cultivation. The Sikhs were mainly agriculturalist so about 60 per cent of the newly-created colonies were allotted to them. At the time of the Partition, almost all of them departed for India.

Majority of Sikhs live in India while a number of Sikhs also live in the UK, Canada and the US. In Pakistan, Sikhs are settled in Nankana Sahib, Peshawar, Hasan Abdal, Dhairki, Kashmir, Ghotki, Mardan, erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Swat, Jacobabad, Karachi, Quetta, and Jhatpat (Balochistan). Sikhs are mainly Pashtoon and Punjabi by ethnicity. Most of them belong to the Arora, Gujraal, Khatri, Khana, Manocha castes. There are many Sikhs who have gone through the ritual of Khalsa. According to ECP, the registered Sikh voters are 8,852.<sup>78</sup>

Liquor is prohibited while they can eat meat of Jhatka (explained later). Their important yearly festivals are Baisakhi, Lorhi and Guru Nanak Jayanti.

Pakistani Sikhs proudly wear turbans, one of the five Ks. They are mostly involved in businesses and have little interest in education, as revealed in our survey. Their women do not do jobs and most of them only attain school education and are then married. They actively participate in politics but cannot hope to contest elections because of their small population. Many jokes are made about Sikhs but publicly they are well received and respected, though there are complaints that they are made fun of in schools. There are many Sikhs who have migrated to India and other countries.

## Christianity in Pakistan

The Pakistani Christian community is a mosaic of Goans, Anglo-Indians, westerns, converts from Hindu, Sikh and Muslims but Punjabi Christians dominate in number. During the British rule over India, thousands of Christian missionaries tried to convert Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims but they did not succeed. The success mainly came among an untouchable tribe of Scheduled Caste Hindus, then called in missionary reports and census as “Churha” (now a pejorative term). These people *en masse* converted to Christianity in Sialkot, Gujranwala, Narowal, Sheikhpura and Kasur from 1870s to 1920. The following chart shows how the number of Christians grew in Punjab.

| Census Year in Punjab | Number of Christians        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1855                  | No native Indian Christians |
| 1868                  | 2,675                       |
| 1881                  | 3,912                       |
| 1891                  | 19,750                      |
| 1901                  | 38,513                      |
| 1911                  | 163,994                     |
| 1921                  | 318,701                     |
| 1931                  | 418,926                     |
| 1941                  | 511,299                     |

78. Asif Mehmood, سال کے دوران غیر مسلم ووٹرز کی تعداد میں فیصد اضافہ, News & Reporting, ایکسپریس اردو blog, July 2, 2018, /story/1223112/1/.

Most of them worked as peasants called *atharis/seipis* (close to bonded labourers) on the lands owned by Sikhs. To improve the socioeconomic status of these converts, missionaries founded dozens of villages, gave small landholdings and provided educational and health facilities in these villages (Shantinagar, Khushpur, Martinpur, Clarkabad, Ransonabad, Batemanabad, Youngsonabad, Clarkabad etc). But these villages were not sufficient for the half a million converts so most of them still remained as bonded labourers of Sikh agriculturalists.

According to the 1941 census, there were about 60,000 Christians living in the eastern Punjab that became part of India after Partition while about 450,000 Christians were living in West Punjab which is now Pakistan. During Partition, the provinces of Bengal and Punjab were divided between India and Pakistan. SP Singha (a Bengali in origin), the Punjab Assembly speaker, Cecil Edward Gibbon (an Anglo-Indian) and Fazl Elahi (a Punjabi Christian) were members of the Punjab Assembly who voted in Pakistan's favour.

Singha in July 1947 also recorded his statement before the Radcliffe Boundary Awards that Christians wanted to join Pakistan because they were 'Muslimised'; trusted Muslims more than Hindus; and their dress, poor economic status and religious belief were closer to Muslims than Hindus who treated them both as pariahs.

Once Pakistan was created, Christian missionaries and Parsees opened the doors of their educational institutes to Muslims. Two hostels in the Forman Christian College were vacated for the injured migrants coming from the Wahga border crossing. This makeshift arrangement later laid the foundation of the United Christian Hospital (UCH), the best hospital in the entire country until the 1980s. The first open-heart surgery in Pakistan was performed here by Dr Don Bowes in 1965, and the first successful replacement of heart valves took place in 1969 in this hospital. The hospital also produced the best nurses in the country until the 1970s.

When the Sikh landlords departed for India, the Christian landless peasants were thrown out of villages by Muslim migrants who had come from India. SP Singha did his best to secure small landholding for roughly 60,000 Christian families but that could not be materialised. At least 300,000 Christians out of about 450,000 became homeless. They were forced to move to cities and work as sanitation workers and live in shanty towns in cities.<sup>79</sup> Urban areas are expanding and these shanty towns have become prime locations in some areas. False accusations are often used to evict the occupants from these areas.

Cecil Edward Gibbon<sup>80</sup> became deputy speaker of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Unfortunately, Pakistan's both Punjab Assembly and the National Assembly have not preserved any record related to him. His picture was removed from the National Assembly but was restored on the insistence of Christian parliamentarian Asiya Nasir.<sup>81</sup>

Christians are mainly located in Punjab; Lahore has their largest population. In Sindh, they are mainly located in Karachi and Hyderabad. Most of them are of Punjabi origin, even those living in Quetta, Gilgit or remote areas like Parachinar are Punjabi.

The spread of Christianity was largely through the *en masse* conversion among a most downtrodden caste in the Punjab through American Presbyterian missionaries. By 1911, Catholics were only 6 per cent of the Christian population in the Punjab and by 1949 they were about 25 per cent of the West Pakistan population but in later years their numbers grew.

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79. Asif Aqeel, "Humiliated and Betrayed Christians," News & Reporting, Daily Times, March 2, 2018, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/209483/humiliated-betrayed-christians/>.

80. Asif Aqeel, "Remembering CE Gibbons Life and Legacy," News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, July 4, 2017, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/3594/remembering-ce-gibbons-life-and-legacy/>.

81. Qamar Zaman, "Missing Photo of Sole Christian Deputy NA Speaker Displayed," News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, September 25, 2013, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/608999/missing-photo-of-sole-christian-deputy-na-speaker-displayed/>.

Over the last four decades, a third influential denominational group has emerged. The non-hierarchical, often non-liturgical and having epicentres of the movement in the US, Evangelicals have grown three times faster than the world population. Today, every fourth person among the 2 billion Christians is a follower of Evangelism. In Pakistan, their percentage is probably higher. Thousands of evangelical household churches have emerged across Pakistan, which has dramatically decreased attendance in Catholic and other "mainline" churches. Followers of these churches are less strict, and vary in their opinions on divorce.

A large number of Christian youth is still not educated and continue to do menial jobs. The women are equal breadwinners for the families. They work as nurses, schoolteachers and domestic workers. Christians often like to hang a cross over the dashboards of their cars (if they own one). Most of them either include their caste in their names or use Masih (Christ) as their surname. Their political participation has increased in recent years but none of them have been able to secure a general seat.

Since 2010, thousands of Christians have gone to Thailand, Sri Lanka and Malaysia to file an asylum with UNHCR but many have returned after their applications were turned down. Their personal matters are governed by the Christian Marriage Act 1872, Divorce Act 1869 and Succession Act 1925 that need to be amended.

## Ahmadis (Qadianis) in Pakistan

There are between two to four million Ahmadis in Pakistan. In 2017, the ECP revealed that there were 156,505 Ahmadis in the country.<sup>82</sup> The 1998 census records Ahmadis at 0.22 per cent of the total population but unofficial estimates give their number close to four million.

Matters of this community are governed by the Ahmadiyya Jamaat, which has made the attaining of education to the intermediate level mandatory for each member of the community. Historically, as compared with other religious minorities, they have been the most educated class. The only Nobel laureate in science in Pakistan, Abdus Salam (1926–1996), was an Ahmadi.

Ahmadis do not identify themselves as a minority but Article 260(3)(b) of the Constitution of Pakistan defines them as one. The Constitution also calls them "Qadiani" instead of Ahmadis.



There have been instances when their murder was condoned on TV or in public gatherings. According to a Pakistan Today report, on International Human Rights Day, District Attock Assistant Commissioner Jannat Hussain Nekokara was "forced to apologise for her comments in support of equal rights for minorities."<sup>84</sup>

Gen Musharraf passed the Conduct of General Elections Order, 2002, and permitted religious minorities, except Ahmadis, to participate in mainstream politics. The Election Act, 2017, abolished the entire Conduct of General Election Order 2002,<sup>85</sup> which means elections for Ahmadis were also restored on the general seats. Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, a far-right political party now banned, locked down Islamabad and brought back the separate electoral system for Ahmadis through the restoration of the General Election Order 2002.

82. Mehmood, "سال کے دوران غیر مسلم ووٹرز کی تعداد میں فیصد اضافہ".

83. Dawn.com, "Geo Apologises for Hate Speech against Ahmadis in Amir Liaquats Show," News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, December 30, 2014, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1154052>.

84. News Desk, "Attock AC Lands in Trouble for Calling for Equal Rights for Minorities," News, Feature and Opinion, Pakistan Today, December 12, 2019, <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/12/12/attock-ac-lands-in-trouble-for-calling-for-equal-rights-for-minorities/>.

85. President of Pakistan, "The Conduct Of General Elections Order, 2002," Document Repository, World Bank, 2002, [https://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org/sites/fdl/files/assets/law-library-files/Pakistan\\_Conduct%20of%20General%20Elections%20Order\\_2002\\_en.pdf](https://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org/sites/fdl/files/assets/law-library-files/Pakistan_Conduct%20of%20General%20Elections%20Order_2002_en.pdf).

In 1948, the Ahmadi community relocated their headquarters from Qadian, India, to Rabwah, officially known as Chenabnagar, district Chiniot. Most Ahmadis live in Sindh and Punjab. They are mainly located in Chiniot, Lahore, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Sialkot and Karachi. They are not from a particular caste or ethnicity like most other religious minorities in Pakistan. Many Ahmadi women work. In some districts some of them wear a different *burqa* (outer covering garment worn by women) which is easily identifiable.

## The Parsees (Zoroastrians)

In Pakistan, Zoroastrians are the most affluent and influential minority. Zoroaster (or Zarathustra) founded the religion about 3,500 years ago in Persia (Iran).<sup>86</sup> It remained the official “religion of Persia (Iran) from 600 BC to AD 650”. The Zoroastrians believe that there is one God, named Ahura Mazda who sent his messenger Zoroaster. They believe in the cosmic struggle between good and evil or “*Moral dualism, which refers to the opposition of good and evil in the mind of mankind.*”<sup>87</sup> They pray several times a day and their worship place is called a Fire Temple or an Agiary. Zoroastrian beliefs can be described in this maxim: “Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds”.

Zoroastrianism died down with the rise of Islam in Persia. From the 10th century onwards, Zoroastrians who fled Persia and arrived in Gujarat where they “*were granted leave to stay, thus founding the Indian Parsee community (Parsee is the Gujarati word for Persian) ... Respect for Zoroastrianism grew through its generous and healthy contributions to the societies it encountered, and reputation as honest businessmen*”.<sup>88</sup>

Parsees marry only within their community and speak the Gujarati language. They moved from Bombay with the British to Hyderabad and later to Karachi around the middle of the 19th century. “*The basis of Karachi's Parsee wealth was their role as military contractors and commissariat agents from the days of Sir Charles Napier*”<sup>89</sup> who annexed Sindh with Bombay in 1843.

The major development in Karachi was the opening of the port in 1853. Ardeshir Wadia, a government employee at the Bombay dockyard, started the Indus steam flotilla to develop trade. Byramjee Eduljee arrived in Karachi in the 1850s and developed the liquor trade. Another name was Byramji Pirojshah Minwalla who owned a fleet of fishing vessels. Dinshaw Maneckji established the first native press in the region. Hormusji Jamshed Rustomji was the first to develop “extensive European trade” and imported wine but also had business in insurance and real estate sectors. In 1884, Rustomji started Karachi Tramway Company and was one of the important founders of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce in 1860.

It is said: “O Parsee, thy second name is philanthropy!!!” Their presence proved this in Karachi.

Seth Edulji Dinshaw was the biggest single donor of the Sindh Arts College in 1883.<sup>90</sup> By 1911, when their population was around 2,000 and they had set up their temple, Bai Virbaiji Sopariwala (BVS) Parsi High School, Karachi Parsi Gymkhana, three charity dispensaries, charity flats, a home for Parsee widows, Parsi Maternity Hospital and Young Men's Zoroastrian Association.

In the middle of the 19th century, they owned almost half of Karachi. When the “Vicerene, Lady Dufferin, collected funds to build a hospital in Karachi in 1884, she collected Rs10,000 from the whole population of the city. Edulji Dinshaw, personally, gave Rs. 85,000”.<sup>91</sup> Lady Dufferin Hospital is where the late prime minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, gave birth to Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari.

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86. BBC, “Zoroastrian: At a Glance,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, October 2, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian/ataglance/glance.shtml>.

87. BBC, “Zoroastrian: Dualism,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, October 2, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian/beliefs/dualism.shtml>.

88. BBC, “Zoroastrian: The Parsis,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, October 2, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian/history/parsis.shtml>.

89. John R. Hinnells, *The Zoroastrian Diaspora: Religion and Migration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 199, <https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198267591.001.0001/acprof-9780198267591>.

90. Akhtar Balouch, “Heroes Forgotten: Searching for the Dinshaws of Karachi,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, September 26, 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1207778>.

91. Balouch.

The British founded a university in 1921 to train the engineers in charge of building the Sukkur Barrage. The Dinshaw family provided the main funding, which is why (NED) University of Engineering and Technology was named after Seth's son Nadirshaw Edulji Dinshaw (NED). In 1859, the first school was opened for Parsee students to teach them Gujarati. It was later moved to a larger house donated by Shapurji Soparivala and the school was named after his wife Bai Virbaiji Sopariwala. In 1918, a separate premise was arranged for girls named the Mama Parsi Girls' Secondary School.

After the Partition in 1947, a flood of migrants to Karachi changed it from a Hindu majority city to a Muslim majority city. In 1951, about 57 per cent of the residents of Karachi were refugees and *“on the personal request of the Quaid-e-Azam, the elders of the Parsee community immediately opened the doors of the school to all Muslim and other non-Parsee children of the new nation”*.

Parsees in Pakistan are mainly settled in Karachi, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Multan. They do not number more than 1,200 in Pakistan, though the ECP in 2017 announced that there were 4,235 registered Parsee voters.<sup>92</sup> However, the fact is that most of the Parsee youth have migrated to western countries and mostly the elderly parents and grandparents are left in Pakistan.

Despite their small number, Parsees have left unforgettable imprints on Pakistan's history.

Murree Brewery, the largest liquor company in Pakistan, is run by Isphanyar Bhandara. His father Minocher Bhandara (died 2008) was one of the most vocal voices for religious minorities in parliament. Isphanyar's grandfather PD Bhandara was a member in the First Constituent Assembly.<sup>93</sup> Ardeshir Cowasjee (1926–2012), social activist, philanthropist and chairman of Pakistan's oldest shipping company East & West Steamship Company, has probably been the most respected columnist in Pakistan's history.

Supreme Court Justice Dorab Framrose Patel<sup>94</sup> (1926–2012) was a Parsee and is famous for a split decision of 4–3 that upheld the decision of Lahore High Court that handed down death penalty to former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Justice Patel was also the founding member of the Asian Human Rights Commission in 1987 and co-founder of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Justice Patel's contemporary Rustam Sidhwa (1927–1997) was also a Supreme Court Justice from 1989 until 1992.<sup>95</sup> Jamsheed Marker (November 1922 – June 2018) was a Pakistani diplomat whose diplomatic career spans about 42 years.

## Baha'is in Pakistan

Baha'is are the fourth largest religious minority in Pakistan with 31,543 registered voters. ~~They~~ considers their scriptures divine.

According to the BBC, Baha'is are found in many countries and number around six million. The shrine of Baha'u'llah is located in Haifa, Israel, on Mount Carmel.

The Baha'i faith has no clergy. They have a solar calendar of 19 months with 19 days. They do not have any worship place in Pakistan but only community centres where they meet and train their youth on morality and ethics. Baha'is believe *“that spiritual life goes hand in hand with the practical life”*. They see socioeconomic

92. Mehmood, “سال کے دوران غیر مسلم ووٹرز کی تعداد میں فیصد اضافہ”

93. National Assembly of Pakistan, “First Constituent Assembly From 1947-1954, List of Members & Addresses” (National Assembly of Pakistan, 1954), <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/1st%20Constituent%20Assembly.pdf>.

94. Beena Sarwar, “PAKISTAN: Dorab Patels Second,” News & Reporting, Human Rights Solidarity, September 30, 2007, <https://web.archive.org/web/20070930190129/http://www.hrsolidarity.net/mainfile.php/1997vol07no04/300/>.

95. The Herald-Tribune, “Rustam Sidhwa, Former Judge,” Sarasota Herald-Tribune, April 2, 1997, sec. Obituary, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1755&dat=19970402&id=xRwiAAAAIbAJ&sjid=RH0EAAAAIbAJ&pg=4139,1406985>.

96. Mehmood, “Non-Muslim Voters Increase by 30% in Five-Year Period.”

97. “BBC, “BBC - Religions - Bahai: Bahá'í Holy Texts,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, September 24, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/bahai/texts/texts.shtml>.

development projects as “an expression of faith in action”. They integrate “*spiritual principles into community development ... promote self-reliance and safeguard human dignity. In this way, patterns of dependency are avoided and conditions of inequality are progressively eliminated.*”

Baha'is in Pakistan do not come from any particular ethnicity or caste. Several young Baha'is work in high positions in government and private sector. They do not participate in politics or look for employment in the armed forces. They do not have their personal laws. Also, respondents from the community told that there was no anti-blasphemy case filed against them.

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98. BBC, “Bahai: Bahá'í Social Action,” Information Website, BBC - Religions, September 24, 2009, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/bahai/customs/socialaction.shtml>.



**Gora Qabristan (White Graveyard) in Lahore**

# CHAPTER SIX

## MINORITIES AND MANIFESTOES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

It is important to see how major political parties that control social and economic life of the country, look at their minorities and how they want to preserve religious diversity. Although manifestoes of parties in Pakistan are often nominal in significance, they could provide some way forward.

### Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) 2018

*Minorities in Pakistan have consistently been denied their constitutional rights in contradiction to the objective of Quaid-e-Azam's vision. The result of prevalent and unaccounted for discrimination against minorities (from all walks of life) has led to violence and their poor socioeconomic and human development.*

1. *Ensure equal access to justice and protection from discrimination in matters of law and order to minorities.*
2. *Act against hate speech and violence towards minorities under the National Action Plan.*
3. *Ensure that the minority quota in all government departments shall be implemented in letter and spirit.*
4. *Interfaith dialogue, especially among young people, to promote tolerance and harmony.*

### Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

1. *Ensure legislative measures to create equal opportunities for minorities.*
2. *Revive the National Commission on Minorities with a proper secretariat to highlight the issues of minorities and vulnerable communities of the country.*
3. *Ensure the protection of minorities at all levels of educational institutions.*
4. *Ensure the true enforcement of job quotas for the minorities.*
5. *Engage enlightened and progressive religious scholars from all faiths and sects for interfaith harmony and dialogue.*
6. *Prevent forced conversion through legislative measures.*
7. *Run national level campaigns through print and electronic media to encourage religious tolerance within the society.*
8. *Urge media houses to ensure special air time/programmes for interfaith harmony and to discourage intolerance and religious discrimination.<sup>99</sup>*

### Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN)

The following statements are from the PMLN manifesto of 2013. Now all these statements have been removed from the 2018 manifesto, without any opposition from non-Muslims members of the party:

*The PML(N) considers religious minorities of the country as equal citizens of Pakistan having the same rights as Muslims. As ordained by Islam and the Constitution of Pakistan, the Minorities will have complete freedom of worshiping and the right to education and employment in all sectors of the economy. Over the years as Pakistan's security situation has deteriorated, and some areas minorities have come under increasing attacks. The current unrest and anxiety being felt by minority communities due to discrimination or repression in certain parts of Pakistan is very unfortunate. There are reports of forced conversions and other acts of intimidation. This situation will be addressed through decisive steps to restore*

99. Pakistan Peoples Party, "Election Manifesto 2018" (Pakistan Peoples Party, 2018), <https://web.archive.org/web/20200215161722/http://www.ppp.org.pk/manifestos/PPP%20MANIFESTO%202018%20-%20ENGLISH.pdf>.

*their confidence. Specific measures for providing equal opportunities to minorities will include the following:*

1. *National Day for Minorities to be celebrated to promote integration, brotherhood and harmony so that the sense of deprivation is removed.*
2. *Necessary legislative measures will be undertaken to ensure there is no forced conversion of religion in the guise of marriage.*
3. *Minority representation to be increased in the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB).*
4. *Quota to be introduced for minorities in educational institutions and public sector jobs including diplomatic missions.*
5. *The Christian community will be permitted to run their own schools and colleges.*
6. *The development funds earmarked for minorities will be doubled.*
7. *The Hindu Marriage Bill will be accelerated through the National Assembly.*
8. *Minorities may be given official leave and advance salary to celebrate their religious festivities in whichever province they are.*<sup>100</sup>

The only statement now left in the 2018 manifesto of the PML-N about minorities is “Awareness will be introduced through school textbooks to end imaginative assumptions against religious minorities.”<sup>101</sup>

## **Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) 2018**

1. *Protection of all rights of religious minorities, which include their life, property and worship places.*
2. *Preference for their religious and rituals in the matter of personal laws.*
3. *Equality in education, employment and citizenship rights and elimination of injustice and discrimination.*<sup>102</sup>

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100. Pakistan Muslim League (N), “National Agenda for Real Change: Manifesto 2013” (Pakistan Muslim League (N), October 7, 2013), <https://web.archive.org/web/20131007221419/https://pmo.gov.pk/documents/manifesto.pdf>.

101. Pakistan Muslim League (N), “Manifesto 2018” (Pakistan Muslim League (N), 2018), [https://web.archive.org/web/20190313175103/https://pmln.org/?page\\_id=10342](https://web.archive.org/web/20190313175103/https://pmln.org/?page_id=10342).

102. Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, “Manifesto: Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal” (Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, 2018), [https://web.archive.org/web/20200215161026/https://jamaat.org/ur/election2018/MMA\\_Manshoor.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20200215161026/https://jamaat.org/ur/election2018/MMA_Manshoor.pdf).



**A Christian driver proudly stands next to his rickshaw having the slogan "*Victory Belongs to Jesus*" written at its windshield**

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to gather information on the history of various religious minorities and identify social, economic, political and legal challenges they are faced with. The research team had limited resources and much of the work is voluntarily done. The study aims to:

1. Look at religious minorities as diverse groups
2. Explore a wider range of issues of religious minorities
3. Propose policy recommendations that cater to issues of each minority group

### Research Methodology

In order to capture religious minorities' perceptions and understanding of their issues, the study undertook a survey exercise. Literature comprising various reports, books, assembly debates and journalistic reports was reviewed. Based on the literature review, a semi-structured survey instrument was developed which was then translated into Urdu (the national lingua franca understood in all provinces). The survey instrument asked for binary responses (Yes or No) and then captured respondents' qualitative responses. There were about 80 questions in the survey form for the respondents.

The study, mainly conducted in Lahore, was able to gather 100 responses. However, brief visits were made to Faisalabad, Nankana Sahib and Islamabad. A few minorities, like Buddhists and Kelashis, could not be reached because of their distant geographic location.

The responses were mostly collected through in-person interviews, wherein the interviewer read out each question on the questionnaire to the respondent and then noted their response on the survey form. Similarly, a number of responses were also recorded over the phone, i.e. respondents were read out questions over the phone and then their responses were written down on the survey form by the interviewer. In some instances, the questionnaire was also sent to the respondents through email, and messaging services and the form was filled and sent back to the author.

Since minority groups such as Ahmadis, Parsees, and Baha'is were not easily accessible, or unwilling to participate in the survey, or had only one or two designated spokespersons who are authorized to respond, therefore, snowball sampling was used while selecting the respondents from these communities.

Representatives of Baha'is and Ahmadis gave responses on behalf of their respective communities, while a few Parsees were available in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Karachi for the survey.

As for the other minority groups that were easily accessible, the author relied on purposive sampling. Individuals from different walks of life were selected, including members of the civil society, scholars, and political, social and religious leaders at the grassroots and higher levels. The members of the civil society, scholars and leaders were selected because of their comparatively greater understanding about the situation of their respective communities in various areas considered by this study. The author used his network to connect to these individuals and relied on his judgment while selecting respondents under these criteria.

The breakdown of these respondents was as follows: 35 Christians, 17 Schedule Caste Hindus, 18 Caste/Jati Hindus, 10 Sikhs, 8 Ahmadis, 6 Parsees, and 6 Baha'is.

The study has a number of limitations on account of its sampling methodology.

Firstly, not all responses were collected from Lahore, mainly because it was difficult to find and access a number of minority groups in Lahore. Moreover, the experiences of minorities in different cities and areas of Pakistan are also likely to be different, so this study somehow tried to capture the differences in issues of minorities on a regional basis.

Secondly, a uniform response collection approach was not used as some responses were collected through an in-person interview, some over the phone and some by sending the survey form to the respondent. This lack of uniform approach is likely to affect the quality and accuracy of the responses received.



**A couple worshipping in the Valmiki Temple in Lahore**

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The responses captured through the survey are described in the following 10 main sections that are further divided into subsections.

### 1. Minority Neighbourhoods, Educational and Medical Institutions, Graveyards/cremation Grounds and Worship Places

This section mainly deals with land and properties of religious minorities. The British had churches in cantonments and cemeteries in cities, which are now in the control of the local Christians. The local Christians also inherited the missionary schools and hospitals. Similarly, Hindus and Sikhs had vast land and worship places that they left, but unlike Christians, their properties, and even worship places in many instances, are being looked after by the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB).

For centuries, it has been the tradition that people of one faith or caste lived together and this continues until now. In Umar Kot, interior Sindh, where the name of a neighbourhood of a single community has a suffix called *parha* (پارھا). A place in Rahim Yar Khan where Christians live together was until recently called a Bhangi Parha. Houses of Christians in many rural areas are usually at the outskirts of a village. This place in the past was called Isaian di (آسان دی)<sup>103</sup>. However, this is changing as the society progresses; and today some of such houses are now inside the villages as well.

#### A. Minority Neighbourhoods

##### *i. Living in rural or urban areas*

Sikh Jaats are associated with agriculture but in Pakistan almost all the Sikhs live in urban areas. At the time of independence, almost all Punjabi Christians were living in rural areas but then they had to move to cities, as explained earlier. Now, a larger number of Christians live in cities but their migration from villages still continues. Hindus, Baha'is and Ahmadis live both in urban and rural areas. Parsees do not live in rural areas at all.

##### *ii. Living in neighbourhoods*

A larger number of Christians and Hindus prefer to live next to the people of their faith in all the four provinces. Sikhs live in neighbourhoods, especially around their worship places, called *gurdwaras*. Most of the Parsees, Baha'is and Ahmadis do not live in specific neighbourhoods and are more likely to live within majority neighbourhoods.

##### *iii. Living in illegal neighbourhoods*

Only Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus reported that many of their people live in illegally occupied areas (known as *katchi abadis*).

103. Francis Nadeem, (یہ دیس ہمارا ہے) (Lahore, Pakistan: Ham Ahang, 1997).

Such neighbourhoods of Christians are sometimes attacked, usually to get them vacated. In 2012, a minor Christian girl, Rimsha Masih, was accused of blasphemy in Islamabad, following which the Christians of the neighbourhood fled the colony. This accusation helped vacate the houses instantly. In 2013, a Christian neighbourhood, Joseph Colony, was attacked in Lahore and the Supreme Court suspected “land occupation” at the heart of the attack.<sup>104</sup>

#### *iv. Ghettoised living*

Life of religious minorities living in the inner cities is quite challenging and needs thorough study. Romana Bashir, who was appointed as a consultant for the Commission for Religious Relations with Muslims by Pope Benedict XVI, says that this “ghettoised mentality” is largely for “safety purposes”.

“Minorities feel more comfortable within their colonies because they do not suffer stigma and mistreatment they face outside of their colonies,” she says.

#### *v. Neglecting minority neighbourhoods in development and basic amenities*

Each year, the government rolls out development schemes in residential areas. These schemes are for road construction, street lights, availability of natural gas, water supply etc. All the communities that live in minority neighbourhoods shared that their areas were neglected. For example, Martinpur and Youngsonabad are the most historic Christian villages in Nankana Sahib District of Punjab. Piped natural gas is provided to adjacent villages but not to these two villages.

Youhanabad in Lahore is the largest Christian neighbourhood. Advocate Riaz Anjum, a resident of Youhanabad, says that road construction and cleanliness in the adjacent Nishtar Town and Youhanabad is markedly “different”. PML-N leader Shehbaz Sharif had won election from the constituency where Youhanabad falls but nothing changed in the neighbourhood, despite his promise to “turn it into Paris.”

PML-N Senator Kamran Michael believes that the minority-dominated areas suffer because of the joint electorate system. Similarly, Ahmadis reported deliberate neglect for Rabwah in development schemes.

#### *vi. Altering demography of minority neighbourhoods*

Some non-Muslims believe that Muslims are penetrating their neighbourhoods by opening shops and buying houses. Ahmadis were also of the view that Rabwah was being penetrated. However, most of the respondents disagree that there was any planned effort for this.

Pakistan Today Deputy Editor Asher John says that Christians were selling their ancestral properties in villages to Muslims and were moving to cities in search of better livelihood and the same applied to those living in cities.

## **B. Minorities' Graveyards and Cremation Grounds**

### *i. Graveyards*

Christians, Baha'is and Ahmadis bury their dead. Scheduled Caste Hindus also bury their dead. However, in recent decades, a miniscule minority among the Scheduled Caste Hindus has started cremation. Parsees leave their dead at the Tower of Silence to be eaten by vultures. They also bury their dead though. In cities, Christians bury their loved ones in cemeteries built by the British, commonly known as *gora kabristan* (Whiteman graveyard). In most villages, the land for graveyards was donated to Christians by the landlords

104. Mudassir Raja, “Joseph Colony Case: SC Suspects Land Occupation as Motive for Arson,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, March 12, 2013, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/519502/joseph-colony-case-sc-suspects-land-occupation-as-motive-for-arson/>.

that they served. Some of these graveyards, including the *gora* graveyards, have been partially or completely encroached. The magnificent ~~graveyards~~ have been encroached.<sup>106</sup>

Meanwhile, Christian residents of villages also face pressure from the heirs of landowners, who want to retake possession of the lands donated by their elders for establishing graveyards.

The Scheduled Caste Hindus in Sindh, Punjab and KP also face the same challenge. In 2013 in Karachi, the body of Bhoromal Bheel, an artist, was dug out because Muslims of the area claimed that the graveyard belonged to them.<sup>107</sup> According to *Express News* Reporter Stram Sanghi, “interfaith harmony has decreased over the years.” He said there were times when the graveyards of Muslims and of scheduled castes were located side by side but this has changed now.

The Parsees are also facing a challenge of encroachment of their graveyard in Rawalpindi.

## *ii. Cremation grounds (shamshan-ghat)*

The Upper Caste Hindus and Sikhs cremate their dead at *shamshan-ghats*. Cremation grounds have also been encroached upon since the Partition of the Indian subcontinent, particularly in cities like Hyderabad where Hindus used to live in high numbers. There is no *shamshan-ghat* in Islamabad or Peshawar but a good number of Hindus exists there.

## **C. Worship Places**

### *i. Construction of new worship places*

Sikhs have many gurdwaras in Pakistan which are sufficient for the community. Parsees and Baha'is are not looking to build new worship places whereas the Ahmadis and Hindus in Lahore believe they won't be allowed to construct new places of worship.

Evangelical Christians have established a large number of churches within their localities.

Methodist Bishop of Multan Leo Roderick Paul, who is also the national coordinator of the Church of Pakistan, said that Christians of South Punjab were facing issues in constructing new churches. Construction of smaller church buildings has also been challenged in the courts in some instances.<sup>108</sup>

It is unfortunate that some respondents believed that minorities were constitutionally barred from building a worship place in Pakistan, which is not true. However, in a village in Toba Tek Singh, the Muslim residents moved an application to the police that Christians should not be allowed to worship in a house church. These Christians have now moved an application in the Lahore High Court to ensure their fundamental right of worship and assembly. Christians had constructed a church on the place which was originally a house. However, it is very common to build a mosque wherever there is space available.<sup>109</sup>

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105. IANS, “Asia's Largest Cross Debuts in Karachi, and Its Bullet-Proof,” News & Reporting, India Today, May 22, 2015,

<https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/karachi-largest-cross-asia-bullet-proof-parvez-henry-gill-254269-2015-05-22>.

106. Kashif Hussain, “The Ruins of Gora Qabristan,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, November 19, 2019, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2102177/1-ruins-gora-qabristan/>.

107. AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, “Hindu Grave Dug up near Karachi,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, October 9, 2013, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1048494>.

108. Anugrah Kumar, “Pakistan Police Shut Down Church in Muslim-Majority Village, Now Forcing Members to Demolish It,” News & Reporting, The Christian Post, June 9, 2018, <https://www.christianpost.com/news/pakistan-police-shut-down-church-muslim-majority-village-forcing-members-demolish-it.html>.

109. Asif Aqeel, “Pakistan: Christians Told They Cant Have a Church in Muslim-Majority Village,” News & Reporting, World Watch Monitor (blog), June 4, 2018, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/pakistan-christians-told-they-cant-have-a-church-in-muslim-majority-village/>.

### *ii. A mosque is built in front of a non-Muslim worship place*

There are several obvious examples where a mosque is built in front of or close to a church, a Hindu temple or a Sikh gurdawara. Many respondents claimed that it made them feel insecure.

### *iii. New restrictions for worship places*

The provincial government introduced the Punjab Security of Vulnerable Establishment Ordinance in 2015 to impose security measures at hospitals, worship places, railway stations etc. This included churches as well because Christians have been particularly targeted by terrorists. However, this measure created problems for smaller churches that could not afford to put security measures in place like walkthrough security gates, metal detectors for frisking, barbed wire around the boundary walls etc. Few churches were closed due to lack of such facilities and in rare cases pastors were also charged under this law.<sup>110</sup>

## **D. Minorities' Institutions: Denationalization of Non-Muslim Educational Institutions**

There are several Christian mission hospitals, schools and colleges in Pakistan. Similarly, Parsees and Ahmadis also run several educational institutions in Karachi. Hindus have very few schools of their own while Baha'is and Sikhs do not have their own institutions.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto nationalised several educational institutions of Ahmadis, Parsees and Christians in 1972. Ahmadis said that while institutions of other religious minorities had been returned their institutions still remain under government's control.

The Edwardes College in Peshawar was nationalised in 2019 (though it may have some legal implications). Several other notable institutions like St. Francis High School (Lahore), Rang Mahal High School (Lahore), Government Murray College (Sialkot) and Government Gordon College (Rawalpindi) remain under the government's control till date.

## **2. Violence and Terrorism and Response of Law Enforcement Agencies**

Violence at the hands of mobs which are sometimes made up of Muslim neighbours can be differentiated from the faceless terrorists who are not known. Such violence has decreased in Punjab since 2015 but there is need for vigilance. In instances of violence or injustice at the hands of the mob, law enforcement personnel are the only hope. However, they have been partisan in a few instances and not free of their own religious biases.

### **A. Violence against Religious Minorities**

There are several modes of violence, but most obvious ones are noted here.

#### *i. Violence against young men*

Violence against young men from minority communities is reported by few respondents of Christian, Scheduled Caste Hindus and Ahmadis. In villages, Christians reported that the tidy appearance of young men can trigger violence against them. But it was not very common.

Nasar Ullah Baloch, an Ahmadi, said it was a routine matter for youths belonging to his community. However, M Parkash from Hyderabad said that Hindu youths in their vicinity did not suffer any violence at the hands of the majority.

110. Asif Aqeel, "Adding Insult to Injury Pakistani Church Leaders Arrested, Fined for Not Putting Security in Place," News & Reporting, World Watch Monitor (blog), December 22, 2017, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/adding-insult-to-injury-pakistani-church-leaders-arrested-fined-for-not-putting-security-in-place/>.

Dr Sabir Michael from Karachi said that violence with Christian youths was taking place in his own neighbourhood. “Two months ago, about 50 Muslim youths marched on our colony because a trivial issue had been given a religious colouring”.

Kamran Michael says that “our youths avoid getting into fights because they know it would turn into a religious matter”.

In Quetta, Christians have not suffered much of this violence but there is deep segregation.

Methodist Bishop of Multan Leo Roderick Paul says that this type of violence with Christian youths takes place in remote areas of South Punjab. It seems that the locality, its size, income level of its residents and similar indicators are also important factors.

Psychological violence was also quoted as a major reason for students facing difficulty in excelling in education.

### *ii. Attacks on worship places (mob or individuals but not terrorist attack)*

Other than Parsees and Baha'is, the other minorities said that their worship places had been attacked more than once over the last few decades.

Former Hyderabad Press Club president Jai Parkash Murani said that attacks on worship places in Sindh had gained some currency in recent years. Baha'is do not face this challenge as they do not have a worship place in Pakistan.

Christians reported that in 2012, a gathering was organised in Mardan against an anti-Islam film. The protestors at one point of their rally moved into the Sarhadi Lutheran Church and set it on fire. President Asif Ali Zardari issued an apology for the incident.<sup>111</sup>

A similar instance was reported in 2006, when two churches were burned in Sukkur after a Christian man was accused by his son-in-law of burning the pages of the Holy Qur'an. The accuser had converted to Islam some years ago and had a land dispute with his father-in-law.<sup>112</sup>

Ahmadis report that their several worship places were demolished or sealed because of their similarity to the architecture of mosques.

### *iii. Neighbourhoods attacked on the account of religious accusation*

Attacks on minority neighbourhoods are a commonplace in Christian localities. Shantinagar (1997), Sangla Hill (2005), Gojra (2009) and Joseph Colony (2013) are the most quoted instances. In each of these, more than 100 houses of Christians were looted, ransacked and set on fire. In the Gojra incident, seven people died. Apart from these, there have been dozens of small scale mob violence that mostly goes unreported.

Ahmadis quoted 1953, 1974, and 1980 as the years when their neighbourhoods came under armed attacks. Religious accusations were the main pretext of such attacks. In 2014, their five houses in Gujranwala were set on fire over an alleged sacrilegious Facebook post. Three females, including two minors, were killed in the attack.<sup>113</sup>

111. INP, “President Condemns Burning of Mardan Church,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Nation, September 23, 2012, <https://nation.com.pk/23-Sep-2012/president-condemns-burning-of-mardan-church>.

112. Staff Report, “22 Booked for Burning Churches, School,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, February 21, 2006, <http://beta.dawn.com/news/179660/22-booked-for-burning-churches-school>.

113. Iqbal Mirza and Agencies, “Mob Attack over Alleged Blasphemy: Three Ahmadis Killed in Gujranwala,” News & Reporting, DAWN.COM, July 28, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1122143>.

The respondents said that in almost all instances, the instigators of mob violence were not apprehended and punished. However, underlying reasons identified included the desire to get an illegal settlement vacated, youths fighting over harassment of minority women, celebration of weddings or any religious festivals that stokes anger.

#### *iv. Neighbourhoods attacked on account of Muslim woman eloping with non-Muslim*

In instances involving the eloping of a Muslim woman with a non-Muslim man is usually given a religious colour. In 2011, a Muslim girl, named Saleha, eloped with a Christian youth Sajid Masih. Saleha's family abducted Sajid's two sisters. The entire Christian neighbourhood was also threatened. The Christians had to return Saleha in order to normalise the situation.<sup>114</sup>

#### *v. An incident abroad triggers violence to a local community*

Christians are sometimes seen as the “proxy” or an “extension” of the West. Similarly, Apart from Christians, Hindus are the only such minority. They are seen as the “agents” of India. If any western individual's or a western country's act is considered anti-Islam, then violence can be poured on a minority associated with that particular country.

Most of the attacks on Christian educational institutions took place over some incident in the West. Few are listed here:

1. **2015:** After the Charlie Hebdo incident, protestors stormed into the Pennell High School and College in Bannu and scuffled with students and staff.<sup>115</sup>
2. **2006:** Christian schools were attacked in Kasur and Peshawar after Jyllands-Posten published the sacrilegious caricatures.
3. **1992:** After the Babri Mosque was demolished in India, about 1,000 Hindu temples were ransacked in Pakistan.
4. **1986:** Three members of the Israeli Knesset's Interior Committee walked into the compound of Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem in January 1986<sup>116</sup> resulting in the ransacking of the Holy Cross Catholic Church in Rahim Yar Khan a month later.
5. **1979, Nov. 21:** Pakistani students were enraged after listening to false news that the US had bombed the holiest site of Muslims in Mecca. The US Embassy was besieged in Islamabad and set on fire.<sup>117</sup> Gen Zia himself visited the school to assure the safety of religious minorities.<sup>118</sup>
6. **1992:** Babri Mosque was demolished and in response about 1,000 Hindu temples were ransacked or rarely were demolished judgment by the Supreme Court, which has condoned the demolition, no reprisals were reported in Pakistan.

#### *vi. Use of mosque loudspeakers near minority neighbourhoods*

Use of loudspeakers has a social utility in the Pakistani culture. It is used to call for prayer and for making important announcements like funerals or time of fasting etc. But there have been many instances of its misuse.

Jai Parkash Murani, a senior journalist based in Hyderabad, said that in Sindh the loudspeaker is misused only when there are tensions with India.

Senator Kamran Michael, however, said that this issue has been observed in remote areas and less developed cities but it also varies from one cleric to the other.

114. Asad Kharal, “Love Affair Pits Muslims against Christians in Sheikhpura,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, May 30, 2011, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/178569/forbidden-passions-love-affair-pits-muslims-against-christians-in-sheikhpura/>.

115. AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, “Anti-Charlie Hebdo Protesters Storm Bannu Christian School,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, January 27, 2015, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1159801>.

116. Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, “A/41/85 - S/17729,” Official Diplomatic Letter, January 10, 1986, <https://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/1ce4f01e2dab5110852575760073e644/Of193b1140eff93c85256b650070e5d4?OpenDocument>.

117. Cameron W. Barr, “A Day of Terror Recalled,” News & Reporting, Washington Post, November 27, 2004, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A15332-2004Nov26.html>.

118. Christian Study Center, News from the Country, Pakistan, C.S.C. Series 21 (Rawalpindi: The Center, 1985).

## B. Terrorism and Religious Minorities:

Law enforcement agencies have successfully control terrorism in the country. The responses show that not all minorities were hit by terrorism (not to be confused with mob violence), when it was routinely taking place. Christians were most hit by terrorism while Parsees, Baha'is, Sikhs and Hindus remained safe. The only important incident mentioned by Ahmadis was of the May 2010 massacre in which their two worship places were attacked in Lahore. At least 94 worshippers died in that incident.

Pakistani Christians, mostly Protestant churches and missionary institutions, have been the main non-Muslim group targeted by terrorists since 9/11:

On October 7, 2001, the US launched an attack on Afghanistan. US President George W. Bush had declared the war on terror as a “crusade”.<sup>119</sup> On October 28, Church of Pakistan – a coalition of Anglicans, Lutherans, Scottish Presbyterians and United Methodists – congregation held a service in the Catholic St. Dominic's Church, Bahawalpur. Until then, these Christians did not have a church building of their own so organised worship meetings in the Catholic Church. Three gunmen stormed the church, killed at least 16 worshippers and injured more than a dozen others. Two days later, an Urdu newspaper received a fax from Lashkar-e-Omar, an unknown terrorist outfit by then, which took responsibility and stated: *“We have accepted the crusade announced by US President George W. Bush. This is the answer to Bush. If he does not stop attacks on Afghanistan, we will continue to take action.”*<sup>120</sup>

After this attack, the following attacks took place. These attacks do not include mob violence and attacks on churches and Christian neighbourhoods:

**March 17, 2002:** Five people, including a US diplomat's wife Barbara Green and their daughter Christine died, in a hand grenade attack on the Protestant International Church in Islamabad.

**August 5, 2002:** Six died and three were wounded after three masked gunmen attacked the Christian Murree School, run by the Church of Pakistan.

**August 9, 2002:** A suicide bomber blew himself up in the Taxila Christian Hospital's John C. Heinrich Memorial chapel service (run by the Presbyterian mission), killed three nurses and injured 24 worshippers.

**September 25, 2002:** Seven workers of a Catholic charity, Idara-e-Amn-o-Insaf (Institute for Peace and Justice), Karachi, “were gagged, tied to chairs and executed with single shots to the head”.

**December 25, 2002:** Unidentified attackers threw a hand grenade in the Presbyterian Church in Daska, Sialkot, killing three girls and injuring 12 others on Christmas Day.

**May 6, 2003:** A powerful explosion took place outside the Pennell High School (named after the UK Church Missionary Society missionary Theodore Leighton Pennell), Bannu, but there were no casualties fortunately.

**January 4, 2004:** Two explosions outside Holy Trinity Church (Church of Pakistan) in Karachi injured 14 people.<sup>121</sup>

**September 8, 2008:** A teenage would-be suicide bomber belonging to Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) was arrested near Christ Church of Pakistan and Catholic Church in the Nowshera Cantonment.<sup>122</sup>

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119. David Blair, “Church Attack Suspects Die in Ambush,” The Telegraph, July 28, 2002, sec. World, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/1402974/Church-attack-suspects-die-in-ambush.html>.

120. Pakistan Christian Post (PCP), Investigative Team, “Bahawalpur Church Carnage 2001, She Still Fears to Speak,” News & Reporting, Pakistan Christian Post, August 10, 2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170810141355/http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/vieweditorial.php?editorialid=118>.

121. Dawn.com, “14 Injured in Karachi Explosions,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, January 16, 2004, <http://beta.dawn.com/news/348166/14-injured-in-karachi-explosions>.

122. Dawn.com, “Teenage Suicide Bomber Held in Nowshera,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, September 9, 2008, <http://beta.dawn.com/news/320414/teenage-suicide-bomber-held-in-nowshera>.

**November 20, 2008:** Two missiles hit Pennell High School, Banu, but no casualty took place.

**September 12, 2010:** An explosive device was detonated at the Lutheran Sarhadi Church, Mardan, injuring a policeman named Fazal-e-Rabbi.

From 2013, more lethal and suicidal attacks were unleashed against the Christian community, especially in Punjab where a majority of Christians are settled.

**September 22, 2013:** Two suicide bombers targeted the Sunday mass at Church of Pakistan's All Saints' Memorial Church in Peshawar. At least 81 died in the attack. Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a faction of the TTP, claimed responsibility for the attack.

**March 15, 2015:** At least two suicide bombers blew themselves up while trying to storm the Church of Pakistan's Christ Church and St. John's Catholic Church in Youhanabad, Lahore, while the Sunday service was going on. The security guards effectively stopped the bombers, however 17 people were killed and dozens were injured in the twin attacks.

**March 27, 2016:** A suicide bomber targeted Christians at an amusement park in Lahore on Easter Day, killing at least 74 people.<sup>123</sup>

**April, 2017:** On Good Friday, the police raided and arrested a Daesh couple who were planning to attack a church on Easter Day. The police killed Ali Tariq and arrested 20-year-old medical student Naureen Leghari who had travelled to Syria to get militant training.

In all these attacks, the perpetrators were almost never apprehended. In 2013 Peshawar church bombings, those arrested were acquitted of the charge because of the weak legal mechanisms and lack of proper evidence gathering.

## C. Attitude of Law Enforcement Agencies

Except Parsees and Sikhs, all religious minorities said that when law enforcement personnel come to know about their religion, their attitude became stern. Sikhs say that law enforcement agencies become more amiable towards them when they find out about their Sikh identity.

Bishop of Multan Leo Roderick Paul shared that he had a road accident 13 years ago. "Someone hit my car, apologised and was ready to pay but in the meantime the police arrived and upon knowing that I was a Christian priest, their attitude changed. I had to pay instead."

Use of torture during investigation is common irrespective of a person's faith. But custodial deaths of persons belonging to religious minorities are often associated with their faith. Article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as CAT, includes "discrimination of any kind" in its definition of torture. A possibility exists that personnel of law enforcement agencies will act differently when dealing with a non-Muslim.

## 3. Minority Women: Harassment, Force Marriage and Forced Conversion

### A. Minority Women

Many Christian women work as nurses, teachers and domestic helpers while Scheduled Caste Hindu women work in the fields. Parsee, Ahmadi and Baha'i women also work but are comparatively in better positions. Hindu upper caste women also work but their numbers are less. Sikh respondents said that no Sikh woman was working and their women were also not attaining education at the college level.

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123. BBC, "Taliban Group Claims Lahore Park Attack," BBC News, March 28, 2016, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35909677>.

## B. Harassment of Minority Women

Several respondents identified that sexual harassment affects all women irrespective of caste, colour and creed. Pakistan ranked 148th out of 149 countries in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap Index in 2018.

### *i. Eve teasing of young women in neighbourhoods, open spaces*

In public spaces, the Hindu scheduled caste women can be identified by their attire (*ghagra* and *choorha*), *sari* and *bindi*. Ahmadi women, if wearing a special Ahmadi burqa, are also easily identifiable. Ayra Indrias said Christian women are sometimes identified from their attire. This identification can result in their harassment. "Our women do not take *dupatta* (head covering). Hence, they believe Christian women are more courtable," said Tahir Jadoon Johnson from Quetta. Karachi University Assistant Professor of Sociology Dr Sabir Michael said, "They tease our women because they know that there will be no retaliation." "Christian women feel more insecure from Christian youths," said Imran Titus Bhatti, the national coordinator of the Church of Pakistan and the Administrator of the UCH.

### *ii. Harassment at workplace*

The respondents gave missed responses when they were asked if minority women, in their neighbourhoods or at the workplace, face higher incidents of harassment.

Dr Delara Mavalvala, a Parsee woman who runs a dental clinic in Karachi, said that their women worked in leading companies and she had never heard of any harassment of their women.

"I feel it's the other way around. We get more respect," retired professor of Kinnaird College for Women, Perin Jehangir Boga, a Parsee, said. "We have been very fortunate to receive only respect and help from other communities. I feel very blessed."

Kamran Michael reported that Christian women suffered harassment at the workplace and in their neighbourhoods.

Ayra Indrias said that women from religious minorities were not associated with a powerful identity so they are more vulnerable to harassment. "At the same time, Christian young women exhibit higher resilience in a way since they excel in education as well as in professions like nursing and teaching."

Centre for Social Justice Executive Director Peter Jacob said, "Vulnerability is the yardstick of sexual harassment. The more vulnerable group you belong to, the more you are susceptible to such incidents."

Renowned human rights lawyer M. Parkash, a Hindu from Hyderabad, said that scheduled caste women suffered harassment in public transport.

## C. Wilful and Forcible Marriages and Conversion to Islam

The issue of forced conversion is of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. Ahmadis, who suffer the highest social and economic pressure, claimed that none of their women have been forcibly converted. Parsees and Baha'is also denied forced conversion of their women.

The data collected shows that the issue of forced conversion and marriage is much more complex than headlines like: "1,000 minority girls forced in marriage every year"<sup>125</sup> Such headlines are primarily related to girls under the age of 18.

124. Amin Ahmed, "Pakistan among Worst Performers on Gender Equality: WEF," News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, December 19, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1452284>.

125. Anwar Iqbal, "1,000 Minority Girls Forced in Marriage Every Year: Report," News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, April 8, 2014, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1098452>.

No known organisation has ever provided data to verify that 1,000 non-Muslim girls are forced to convert every year. In 2014, an NGO, named Movement for Solidarity and Peace in Pakistan (MSP),<sup>126</sup> quoted<sup>127</sup> a report based on the data collected by the Catholic news agency Fides from undisclosed sources. The report claimed that about 700 Christian women and 300 Hindu women were kidnapped and forced to change their faith in Pakistan every year. The report did not mention any names or incidents in support of its claim. Now, the data compiled by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), a non-government organisation working on minority rights, shows that 160 incidents of forced conversion took place over six years (2013-2019), which seems more reasonable.<sup>128</sup>

In certain instances, marriages out of free will are not accepted by their families, as the Dawn newspaper reported.<sup>129</sup> Secondly, all respondents informed that the conversion could be about anything except “religion”. For them, the bothersome aspect is not the conversion but the immature age of converts (and it almost always involves females).

Third, the respondents said that law enforcement agencies do not handle such cases above their own religious convictions. Marriage of a Muslim minor girl even with the consent of her parents is not possible under the Child Restraint Act 2016. Parents can be arrested for the violation. But for a non-Muslim minor girl, these standards get swayed and it turns into a religious conflict between the Muslim majority and a non-Muslim minority.

Jai Murani from Hyderabad says that the main issue was conversion of minor females. United Nations Women Sindh Office Head Kapil Dev relates the entire issue with the lack of legal mechanism that supports interfaith marriage.

“When people of different faiths fall in love the only choice is to convert to the religion of the other. The second challenge is that such reports are coming only from certain cities, especially smaller cities. Conversion is taking place among women younger than 18.”

Fourth, in several instances, minority women are befriended and then later forced to change their faith on the pretext of marriage. Member of Sindh Assembly Mangla Sharma said that “mostly these young girls are allured to a relation and then blackmailed to contract a marriage”. But for marriage, it is always the woman that has to convert. In such cases, men threaten to harm the family of the woman. In April 2018, a Christian woman Asma Yaqoob, an illiterate domestic worker, was set on fire by her paramour, Muhammad Rizwan Gujjar in Sialkot:

*During investigation, Gujjar said that Asma wanted him to convert to Christianity but he wanted her to convert to Islam. Both of them were unwilling to abandon their religions so Asma wanted to make a final decision about the matter that night ... Gujjar said that he poured some petrol on the ground and told Asma that if none of them was willing to convert then they should die together. Gujjar said that he had lit the matchstick only to threaten Asma, but it fell from his hand, resulting in serious burn injuries to the woman and causing her death.<sup>130</sup>*

126. MSP, “Movement for Solidarity and Peace - in Pakistan,” Facebook Page, Facebook, accessed January 10, 2020, [https://www.facebook.com/MSP.pakistan/?\\_rdc=2&\\_rdi](https://www.facebook.com/MSP.pakistan/?_rdc=2&_rdi).

127. MSP, “Forced Marriages & Forced Conversions in the Christian Community of Pakistan” (Pakistan: Movement for Solidarity and Peace (MSP Inc.), April 2014), [https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/msp/pages/162/attachments/original/1396724215/MSP\\_Report\\_-\\_Forced\\_Marriages\\_and\\_Conversions\\_of\\_Christian\\_Women\\_in\\_Pakistan.pdf?1396724215](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/msp/pages/162/attachments/original/1396724215/MSP_Report_-_Forced_Marriages_and_Conversions_of_Christian_Women_in_Pakistan.pdf?1396724215).

128. Waqar Gillani, “Nankana Sahib Incident and Forced Conversions: Not an Isolated Event,” News, Feature and Opinion, The News on Sunday, January 12, 2020, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/596493-not-an-isolated-event>.

129. Naeem Sahoutara and Ali Ousat, “The Strange Case of the Silent Women,” News, Feature and Opinion, DAWN.COM, November 10, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1515863>.

130. Asif Aqeel, “Pakistani Christian Dies after Being Set on Fire by Muslim in Alleged Dispute over Who Should Convert,” News, Feature and Opinion, World Watch Monitor (blog), April 23, 2018, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/04/pakistani-christian-dies-after-set-on-fire-by-muslim-in-alleged-dispute-over-who-should-convert/>.

Fifth, one respondent said that marrying a Muslim woman had many social and economic responsibilities while marrying a non-Muslim woman did not require the same. For example, a wedding ceremony itself was a huge burden in the Pakistani social system. Marrying after elopement did not cause the same burden. “If the marriage does not succeed then there is no social pressure to go through with it.”

Sixth, most of respondents cited “social mobility” and “economic prosperity” as the reasons behind these incidents. Pakistan Meghwar Council President Arjun Das said this “is because of the negligence of the family. It is also because of poverty. Parents are not giving time to their children.”

Dr Phulo Meghwar believed that the issue mostly stemmed from economic disparity between Muslims and non-Muslims. “Mostly the daughters of poor families convert.”

Bishop of Multan Leo Roderick Paul said he believed that poor Christian girls wanting to get rid of poverty are forced to enter into marriages with persons from outside the community.

Seventh, in the Indian subcontinent marriage is only possible within one's caste. In Pakistan, this practice still exists, especially among Hindus. Dr Phulo Megwarh said that “inter-caste marriages among Hindus are a big problem and sometimes no other choice is left. Men are given preference at every instance in Hindu families so some attention from an outsider attracts these young women towards them.”

## 4. Freedom of Religion and Belief

Freedom of religion is described in the Preamble of the Constitution of Pakistan. Different minorities and social aspects brought forth different responses.

### A. Religious Identity

The preamble and Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees that minorities as distinct groups have the right to preserve their language, culture and script. Though Pakistan is not a signatory to it, Article 2 of Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities notes:

*Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination.<sup>131</sup>*

#### *i. Hiding religion at school/workplace*

It was reported that some Christians hide their identity to avoid religious segregation. There are complaints by students that their classmates call them Isai Chuhra (loaded racial terms explained later). They refuse combined eating and drinking or even sitting together. The area, city and school the minority student goes to also matters.

The CEO of Murree Brewery Isphanyar Bhandara went to the St. Mary's School in Rawalpindi. He recalled how his schoolteacher used to tell him that he could be “saved from the hellfire” if he converted to Islam. “It was supposedly a joke but it still haunts me,” he said.

131. The General Assembly, “Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities” (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, February 3, 1993), [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Booklet\\_Minorities\\_English.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Booklet_Minorities_English.pdf).

Ahmadis often hide their identity at workplace and educational institutions.

Karachi University Assistant Professor Dr Sabir Michael said that even though the standard of Christian educational institutes has fallen dramatically, yet he was still sending his children to a Christian school so that they do not face social discrimination.”

Former Lahore District Council Member Rafaqat Sahotra said that his son was repeatedly asked to convert to Islam after which he quit the academy he was attending.

At the same time, it is a common practice to mention religion in a job resume. Also, since 2009, there is a job quota for religious minorities so they have become bold in claiming their religious identity in the economic and educational circles.

Respondents also informed that it was difficult to hide one's religious identity for a longer time in an educational institution, especially at the school level. One may successfully hide their identity in menial jobs like factory workers or daily wagers, etc.

### *ii. Giving a Non-Muslim child a neutral name for better social integration?*

Bishop Samson Shukardin of Hyderabad, told 'Aid to the Church in Need' that “Many minorities give their children Islamic names so they will not be singled out as Christians and become potential targets for discrimination in primary or secondary schools or at the college level”.<sup>132</sup>

Most respondents gave a mixed reaction to this question as the responses in the last section show. Some of Christian respondents said that English names invite trouble. Others believe that a neutral name does not help because the person's faith is bound to be revealed sooner or later. However, everyone agreed that in brief social interactions like visiting a shop, a bank or travelling on a train the experience can be different.

Pronunciation is also a challenge. Sometimes it is twisted to ridicule the name of the minority person. “My name Alison Titus was changed to Imran Titus due to pronunciation issues,” said Titus, the UCH administrator. Peter Jacob said it was good to have a name that conveys religion so that there is no shock later.

### *iii. Renting a house to a non-Muslim*

According to Hindus and Christians, Muslims are not reluctant in renting out their property to non-Muslims because they believe that persons belonging to minority communities are too weak to default on rent payments or make any attempt to grab the property. However, in recent years, few such cases have surfaced where minorities were denied a house on rent.

### *iv. Vilification of minorities in textbooks*

Several respondents said that over the last few years, several offensive examples against non-Muslim faiths had been removed which shows that the Pakistani state is trying to improve the general treatment of its religious minorities.

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132. Staff Writer, “Christian Parents Giving Children Islamic Names to Avoid Abuse in Schools, Says Pakistani Bishop,” News, Feature and Opinion, Christian Today, October 5, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20191006095027/https://christiantoday.com/article/christian-parents-giving-children-islamic-names-to-avoid-abuse-in-schools-says-pakistani-bishop/133367.htm>.

The excerpts picked up by the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) show that students are taught a binary division of Muslims and non-Muslims where non-Muslims are shown as unnecessarily aggressive, treacherous, mean and always busy conspiring against Muslims over the course of history in the Indian subcontinent, while Muslims are shown as tolerant, innocent or unfortunate.<sup>133</sup> Following are some examples:

- The Punjab Textbook Board's Class III (ages 7-8) book on Urdu teaches that Islam is “superior” to all other religions.
- The Sindh Textbook Board's Class VII (ages 11-12) book on Islamic Studies reads: “Most of the [other] religions of the world claim equality, but they never act on it.”
- The Punjab Board's Islamic Studies textbook for Class VIII (ages 12-13) reads: “Honesty for non-Muslims is merely a business strategy, while for Muslims it is a matter of faith.”
- For Class VI (ages 10-11), the Punjab Board's Islamic Studies book says: “For the person who is neither in financial need, nor governed by a tyrant, and still does not perform [the pilgrimage to Mecca], it does not make a difference whether he dies as a Christian or a Jew.”
- The Punjab Board's Class VI book on Islamic Studies says: “Though being a student, you cannot practically participate in jihad, but you may provide financial support for jihad.”
- The Punjab Board Class V (ages 9-10) Social Studies book says: “Religion plays a very important role in promoting national harmony. If the entire population believes in one religion, then it encourages nationalism and promotes national harmony.”
- “The better a Muslim we become, the better a citizen we prove to be,” teaches the Punjab Board's Class IV (ages 8-9) book on Urdu.<sup>134</sup>

Respondents to our research questions expressed concern over the use of the term “Kafir” for non-Muslims in school textbooks. Hindu respondents said that it was disturbing for them that their faith is negatively portrayed in the national curriculum. Several Christians also pointed towards some “direct” references made to them in textbooks.

## B. Freedom of Worship

### *i. Islamic Studies for non-Muslims*

Article 22(1) of Constitution of Pakistan says that:

*No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship, if such instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.*

Islamic Studies is a compulsory subject and in most of the cases non-Muslim students cannot avoid it. Islamic teachings are part of Urdu, English, Science, History and other textbooks. Non-Muslim students can opt for “Ethics” instead of Islamic Studies but teachers, as well as textbooks of the subject, are not readily available. Also, marks in Islamic Studies are liberally given so non-Muslim students opt for this even if they can choose Ethics.

133. Asif Aqeel, “Report: Pakistan School Textbooks Riddled with Religious Hate Material,” News & Reporting, World Watch Monitor (blog), August 25, 2016, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/08/report-pakistan-school-textbooks-riddled-with-religious-hate-material/>.

134. Atta-ur-Rehman Saman, Kashif Aslam, and Aila Gill *حسب زده تعليم بے رهائی*, ed. Cecil Shane Chaudhry (National Commission of Justice and Peace, February 2016), <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/old-site-imgs-pdfs/4601826.pdf>.

Former education secretary Professor Mehar Dad, who is from the Baha'i community, said that there was nothing wrong in studying Islamic Studies but most of the respondents desired that their youths be taught only their religion.

Some said that students get more marks in Islamic Studies so they opt for it. Many respondents said that religion should be taught at home, but if necessary, the minorities should be taught their own religion. After all, everyone needs to learn “Ethics”, including Muslim students. Some even said that “Ethics” is taught with an Islamic viewpoint.

### *ii. Public display of religious symbols*

Christians and Sikhs are probably the luckiest when it comes to public display of their religious symbols.

In metropolitans, Christmas trees can be seen in five-star hotels, and some shops but this is not the case with Hindus in Punjab. Many Christians like to decorate a cross in their vehicles, though the practice has decreased over the years.

In Sindh, Hindus can wear their religious symbols but they avoid doing so. Most of the Hindus avoid *tilka* (a mark usually on the forehead of men), *bindi* (a coloured dot on the forehead of women), *sindoor* (orange-red vermilion used by married women along the parting of their hair), except *mangalsutra* (meaning “auspicious thread” worn by married women in the neck) because it is hidden under the garments.

Gujarati, Rajasthani and Marhata Hindu women wear traditional sari, which are imported from India. However, sari is worn especially during family or community programmes.

Scheduled caste Hindu women wear *ghagra* (“a long full skirt, often decorated with embroidery, mirrors, or bells”) and *choora* (bangles that go up over the arms; often green, white or golden depending on the Scheduled Caste involved). This serves as a sign of their lower status and these women are not treated well in public spaces and public transport. In many cities in Sindh like Kashmore and Jacobabad, Upper Caste Hindu women sometimes wear a *burka* to conceal their identity in public. Hindus may feel comfortable wearing these symbols in programs arranged by Christians.

Sikhs wear turban and they do this across the country without any hesitation, this is because of the popular appeal of Sikhs among the people in general. However, carrying a dagger is a challenge for those who take the baptism of Khalsa, especially when traveling in a plane.

In Lahore and Peshawar, Sikhs are exempted from wearing a helmet because of the turban they are not fined.<sup>135</sup>

Ordinance XX 1984 bars Ahmadis from posing as Muslims in public in any possible way.

## **C. Freedom of Expression**

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration says:

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*



135. Jawwad Rizvi, “Sikhs Be Exempted from Wearing Helmets: Lawmaker,” News, Feature and Opinion, The News, January 10, 2019, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/416854-sikhs-be-exempted-from-wearing-helmets-lawmaker>.

*Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court.*

#### *i. Freely engage and respond in a religious argument*

It is common to invite non-Muslims to study/convert to Islam, but discussion on any religious aspects is not possible.

Lahore Balmiki Temple Pandit Bhagat Lal summarised the issue in these words: “Only if the discussion is in compliance with Shariah.”

Tehreek-e-Labbaik chief Khadim Hussain Rizvi's speeches were also quoted by some respondents. For example, Kamal Kumar Rajput from Quetta said that “we feel pain when classmates and friends casually say 'O You Hindu' or 'You Son of a Hindu’”.

#### *ii. Ridiculing faiths of religious minorities*

Most of the participants confirmed that their faiths are ridiculed by Muslims.

Romana Bashir says that “Every day we are told that Jesus is not the Son of God and the Bible has been changed. Other religions must be abolished; Islam is superior.”

Several respondents Christian said they had often heard remarks such as “Bible has been altered”, “Jesus is not the Son of God” and Hindu respondents said they were told that they “worship idols”. At the time, the situation is so grim that they cannot freely express their “exact” theological viewpoint even when discussing religion with their friends.

#### *iii. Freedom of publishing religious literature*

Freedom of publishing religious literature varies from one community to the other and one geographic location to the other. Although Christians and Baha'is can freely publish their religious literature, yet Christian religious leaders say that they had to be extra vigilant in case anything controversial in the texts gets published. These religious publications are available only at church-run book stores, shops and stalls outside religious gatherings.

The Bible Society (Lahore), Masihi Ishaat Khana (Lahore) and St. Paul Communication Centre (Lahore) are major Christian publishers.

Hindu respondents from Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said that printers refused sometimes printing their religious banners, pamphlets and books as there were no Hindu printers/publishers in their provinces. Religious books and other material is mainly printed in Sindh or sometimes imported from India.

Ahmadis said that since 2014, their publications have been banned in Punjab.

Sikhs bring all religious publications from India while Parsees have no publications.

#### *iv. Religious scriptures and relics freely available*

Christians said that their scriptures and relics are available at their religious shops and stalls. Hindus in Sindh said the same thing. However, Hindus in KP said that their relics were not easily available. Sikhs said that

their relics and scriptures were imported from India while Baha'is and Parsees said they have access to their scriptures. Ahmadis, however, face a major challenge in acquiring their religious scriptures.

#### *v. Can propagate religion to Muslims?*

Article 20(a) of Constitution of Pakistan notes:

*Subject to law, public order and morality, every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion*

However, all respondents were of the opinion that they could not propagate their religion among members of the Muslim majority without fear of reprisal.

#### *vi. Minorities and the month of Ramadan*

Ramadan is the month when all Muslims fast. Gen Zia-ul-Haq introduced The Ehtram-e-Ramazan Ordinance 1981. The word “*ehtram*” means respect and it is achieved through restraining public eating during the fasting time. In many areas, however, restaurants and smaller food shops use curtains during Ramazan to conceal their business from public eye view.

In many places, communities, especially Sikhs in Peshawar, arrange *iftaar* programs (the meal with which Muslims end their daylong fast). Many respondents said that it is a cultural thing that promotes interfaith harmony.

In 2016, a Hindu man, Gokul Das (80), was beaten for publicly eating rice a little before *Iftaar*.<sup>136</sup> Respondents were asked if they felt any pressure about not eating publicly and they responded with “yes”.

Lutfullah Khan, who takes care of a Baha'i centre in Islamabad, said that they also fast but at a different time.

A few respondents said that there should be some arrangement for the elderly, children and non-Muslims during the month of Ramadan as it can be troublesome for them.

Senator Kamran Michael said that lawmakers were considering imposing a ban on all musical and other entertainment activities during the Muslim holy month.

Parsee dentist Dr Delera Mavalva said, “People might think it is inconvenient but I have not felt that way. I love my country and the people here. It is a good thing that they fast and I respect their faith. Why eat outside when you can eat at home?”

## **D. Freedom of Association and Movement**

Overall, religious minorities have liberty to associate and move wherever they want to. Article 15 of the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees freedom of movement. However, certain aspects are an exception to this.

#### *i. Communication with coreligionists outside Pakistan*

Almost all Christians, Parsees, Sikhs, Ahmadis and Baha'is said that they could freely communicate with their coreligionists anywhere in the world. Hindus said that they exercised caution when communicating with their community members in India. As Parsees also came from the Indian Gujarat to Karachi, they have strong ties in India. However, they have no problem communicating with Indians.

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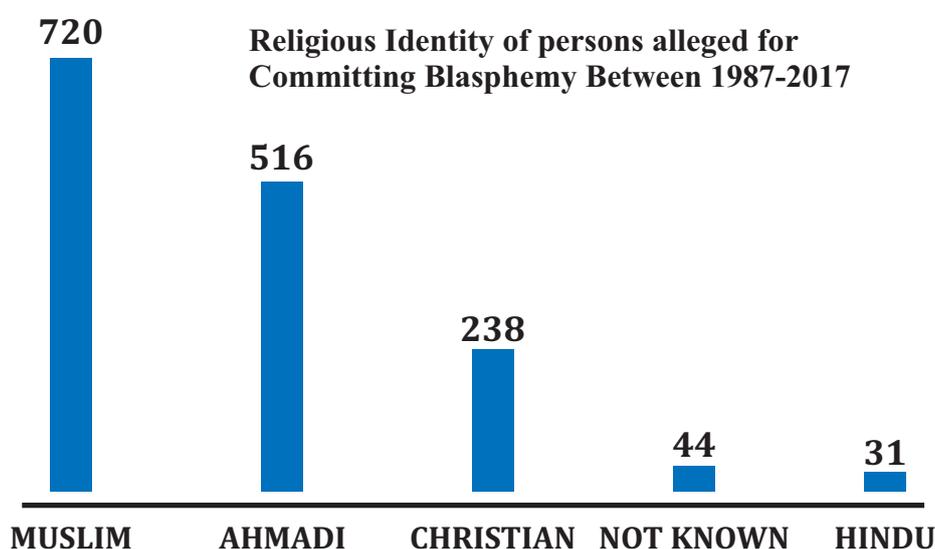
136. Qadeer Tanoli, “Hindu Man Beaten for Eating in Ramazan,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, June 12, 2016, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1121012/hindu-man-beaten-eating-ramazan/>.

## ii. Minorities and pilgrimage in other countries

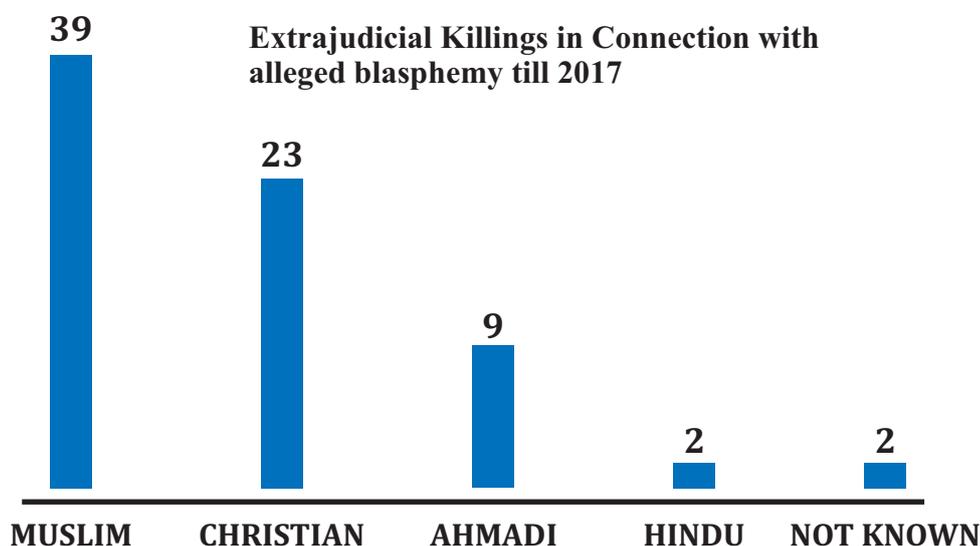
All religious minorities who were interviewed have sacred places outside Pakistan they wish to visit. Christians named the Vatican, France ( Lourdes), Israel (Jerusalem), Jordan and Turkey. Parsees named the Indian Gujarat. Sikhs and Hindus have several places of religious significance in India. Baha'is named Israel. Ahmadis named Qadian in India. Parsees have no issue in visiting India and similar was the response of Sikhs. But Hindus said that they were hesitant to visit India, though many had visited the country. It is worth mentioning here that since Pakistan does not have diplomatic relations with Israel, a pilgrimage to Israel is not possible for Christian or Baha'i.

## 5. Anti-blasphemy Laws and Religious Minorities

Almost half of anti-blasphemy cases are registered against non-Muslims who are only about 3 per cent of the total population. The highest number of anti-blasphemy cases is registered against Ahmadis and Christians. Hindus are the largest minority but very few cases are filed against them. Similarly, no case has ever been filed against Parsees, Baha'is and Sikhs. (The following data is taken from Herald magazine).<sup>137</sup>



A similar picture is of extrajudicial killing of those suspected of committing blasphemy.



137. Asad Ahmed, "A Brief History of the Anti-Blasphemy Laws," News, Feature and Opinion, Herald Magazine, March 9, 2018, <https://herald.dawn.com/news/1154036>.

The offences relating to religion or anti-blasphemy laws were introduced in Chapter XV of the Indian Penal Code 1860. On June 15, 1835, the British Government of India ordered the Indian Law Commission – consisting of TB Macaulay and three others – to prepare a penal code for the entire India. The commission submitted the draft of penal code on May 2, 1837 to the Governor General of India George Lord Auckland. Lord Macaulay wrote the following about the Chapter related to religious offences:

*The principle on which this Chapter has been framed is this, -- that every man should be allowed to profess his own religion, and that no man should be suffered to insult the religion of another.<sup>138</sup>*

*The question whether insults offered to a religion ought to be visited with punishment does not appear to us at all to depend on the question whether that religion be true or false. The religion may be false, but the pain which such insults give to the professors of that religion is real ... There is perhaps no country in which the [British] Government has so much to apprehend from religious excitement among the people. The Christians are numerically a very small minority of the population ... Under their rule are placed millions of Mahomedans, of differing sects, but all strongly attached to the fundamental articles of the Mahomedan creed, and tens of millions of Hindoos, strongly attached to doctrines and rites which Christians and Mahomedans join in reprobating. Such a state of things is pregnant with dangers of which can only be averted by a firm adherence to the true principles of toleration. On those principles the British Government has hitherto acted with eminent judgment ... No offence in the whole code is so likely to lead to tumult, to sanguinary outrage, and even to armed insurrection. The slaughter of a cow in a sacred place at Benares in 1809 caused violent tumult, attended with considerable loss of life .. We have therefore empowered the Courts, in causes of this description, to pass a very severe sentence of the offender.<sup>139</sup>*

The Indian Penal Code was put in force in 1860. An amendment was introduced in 1927. In 1924, a Hindu publisher, Rajpal, published a sacrilegious pamphlet which offended Muslims' religious sentiments. Because the penal code did not deal with anything offensive in writing, the British introduced Section 295-A, which forbade deliberate and malicious “outraging feelings of any class of His Majesty's subjects by words either spoken or written”. Rajpal was convicted under Section 153 of the penal code – “Promoting enmity between different groups” – but his conviction was set aside by the Lahore High Court.

On April 6, 1929, Rajpal was killed by 19-year-old Ilm Din. Mr Jinnah, represented Din in court but lost. It is believed to be the only case he lost during his practice.<sup>140</sup> Din was executed on October 31, 1929. Allama Muhammad Iqbal while tearfully placing Din's body in the grave, remarked, “While we were engaged in fruitless verbal discussion, the son of a carpenter surpassed us all”.<sup>141</sup> Muhammad Din Taseer,<sup>142</sup> a poet and Cambridge-educated father of late Governor Salmaan Taseer, provided for Din's funeral service out of reverence.<sup>143</sup> Iqbal and Taseer formed the 'Ghazi Ilm Din Committee.'<sup>144</sup> Din is commemorated as a martyr hero.<sup>145</sup>

138. Indian Law Commission, “The Indian Penal Code,” Act XLV of 1860 § (1863), 217, <https://ia800908.us.archive.org/1/items/indianpenalcode00macpgoog/indianpenalcode00macpgoog.pdf>.

139. Thomas Babington Macaulay, “Critical and Historical Essays. Biographies. Indian Penal Code. Contributions to Knights Quarterly Magazine,” in The Works of Lord Macaulay, Complete, vol. 7 (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1866).

140. Xestan, “Jinnahs Only Lost Case- Defending the Killer of a Blasphemer, Ghazi Ilm Deen (R.H),” Article, January 3, 2011, <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/jinnahs-only-lost-case-defending-the-killer-of-a-blasphemer-ghazi-ilm-deen-r-h.87158/>.

141. Pervez Hoodbhoy, “A Long, Sad Year after Salman Taseers Killing,” The Hindu, January 4, 2012, sec. Comment, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/A-long-sad-year-after-Salman-Taseers-killing/article13353572.ece>.

142. Khaled Ahmed, “The Legacy of an Orphan Genius,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, February 4, 2012, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/331889/the-legacy-of-an-orphan-genius/>.

143. Staff Report, “LHCBA Condemns Taseer, Bhattis Assassination,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, March 10, 2011, [https://web.archive.org/web/20110310160700/http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011%5C03%5C09%5Cstory\\_9-3-2011\\_pg13\\_3](https://web.archive.org/web/20110310160700/http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011%5C03%5C09%5Cstory_9-3-2011_pg13_3).

144. Yasir Latif Hamdani, “ANALYSIS: A Look Back for Qadri Supporters,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, October 10, 2011, [https://web.archive.org/web/20111119000226/http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\10\10\story\\_10-10-2011\\_pg3\\_4](https://web.archive.org/web/20111119000226/http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011\10\10\story_10-10-2011_pg3_4).

145. Yasir Latif Hamdani.

In 1947, Pakistan achieved independence and inherited the legal legacy of anti-blasphemy laws that were of no specific religion. The Indian Penal Code was changed to Pakistan Penal Code, but the anti-blasphemy laws remained untouched for decades.

During these years, the right-wing political party Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) played an important role in the evolution of the anti-blasphemy laws.

In 1953, The JI, along with other religious groups organized riots against Ahmadis. In 1962, the Council of Islamic Ideology was created under the newly introduced Constitution of Pakistan. The role of this advisory council was to propose new amendments and examine if there were any laws in conflict with Islamic teachings.

Gen Zia introduced several changes in the anti-blasphemy laws. The following chronology captures the development of these these laws:

| <b>PPC Section</b> | <b>Offence</b>  | <b>Punishment</b>   | <b>Year Enacted</b>  |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>295</b>         | Defiling place of worship, with Intent to insult the religion of any class:   | Imprisonment for two years, or a fine, or both  | Indian Penal Code 1860   |
| <b>296</b>         | Disturbing a religious assembly   | 1 year imprisonment, with or without fine   | Indian Penal Code 1860   |
| <b>297</b>         | Trespass on burial place  | 1 year imprisonment, with or without fine   | Indian Penal Code 1860   |
| <b>298</b>         | Uttering words, with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person  | 1 year imprisonment, with or without fine   | Indian Penal Code 1860   |
| <b>295-A</b>       | Deliberate and malicious acts Intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs  | 10 years, or with fine, or with both  | Through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, XXV of 1927 (After hanging of Ghazi IIm Din Shaheed) |
| <b>298-A</b>       | Defiling the sacred name of any wife (Ummul Mumineen), or members of the family (Ahle-bait), of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), or any of the righteous Caliphs (Khulafa-e-Rashideen) or companions (Sahaaba) of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) | Imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both | By General Zia-ul-Haq, Pakistan Penal Code (Second Amendment) Ordinance, XLIV of 1980          |

|              |  |   |   |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| <b>295-B</b> | Defiling, etc., of Holy Qur'an   | Imprisonment for life   | By General Zia-ul-Haq through PPC (Amendment) Ordinance, I of 1982  |
| <b>298-B</b> | Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles, etc., reserved for certain holy personages or places by Ahamdis | 3 years of imprisonment and fine  | By General Zia-ul-Haq through Anti-Islamic Activities of Qadiani Group, Lahori Group and Ahmadis (Prohibition and Punishment) Ordinance, XX of 1984 |
| <b>298-C</b> | Person of Qadiani group, etc., calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith                | 3 years of imprisonment and fine  | By General Zia-ul-Haq through Anti-Islamic Activities of Qadiani Group, Lahori Group and Ahmadis (Prohibition and Punishment) Ordinance, XX of 1984 |
| <b>295-C</b> | Use of derogatory remarks, etc., in respect of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)                          | Death (life imprisonment was also a possible punishment but was struck down in 1991 by the Federal Shariat Court) | By National Assembly legislation Criminal Law (amendment) Act, 111 of 1986  |

The punishment of death and life imprisonment under Section 295-C was challenged in the Federal Shariat Court. In 1991, the FSC struck down the life imprisonment and ordered the PML-N government to challenge it within a stipulated time in the Supreme Court, if it disagreed with the punishment. The PML-N government opted not to challenge the FSC judgment; hence, the punishment for offense under 295-C is punishable with death.

In October 1998, Gen Musharraf took over the government. He showed a desire to reform several things, including the anti-blasphemy laws, but due to opposition, he announced in 2000 that the laws would not be touched.<sup>146</sup>

## 6. Economic Prosperity of Religious Minorities

Economic prosperity is probably the most important indicator for minorities because it is the only indicator where they are somewhat free to progress. Education is the prerequisite to economic progress, especially for minorities who do not feel safe doing business.

### A. Educational Level and Economic Prosperity

#### *i. The educational level: high school or above*

Educational level among religious minorities greatly varies. Christians said that most of their youth was “under-matric” (high school dropouts). However, many said that this trend was changing and the youth was developing more interest in education. This is rather interesting because Christians believe that “they” (though these were western missionaries) had been educating people of the land in the past, referring to the

146. Owen Bennett-Jones, “Pakistan’s Blasphemy Law U-Turn,” BBC News, May 17, 2000, sec. World: South Asia, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/751803.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/751803.stm).

the Christian educational institutions.

Baha'is said that most of their youth had either completed intermediate studies or had graduated. Ahmadis said that intermediate education was compulsory for every member of their community but most of them were graduates. Sikhs said that their youth did not usually complete matriculation as they were more interested in business but the trend was changing.

Among the scheduled castes, Meghwars are performing exceptionally high. Respondents said that the situation of Bheels and Kohlis, however, needs more attention.

### *(ii) Adequate number of professors in universities, doctors and engineers in the industry*

When asked if there was a significant number of professionals like doctors, engineers and college/university professors in their community, the Sikhs, Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus said that they did not have a reasonable number of professionals like doctors, engineers and college professors in their community. On the other hand, Baha'is, Ahmadis, Upper Caste Hindus and Parsees said that a significant number of their communities had such professionals and educated persons.

Among Scheduled Caste, the overall response was “no” but the Meghwar community seemed very confident that it has a “significant” number of such professionals in their community. In recent years, the highest number of non-Muslim doctors in Sindh has come from this community.

## **B. Recruitment in Civil Services**

Almost all communities said that they did not have sufficient numbers in the civil services.

Parsees, Baha'is, Sikhs and Upper Caste Hindus said that they preferred business even if they become doctors or engineers, which is why they had smaller numbers in government services.

Sikhs said that only some members of their community were educated which is why few of them join government jobs.

Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus said that they were endeavouring but the number was not “satisfactory”. They also complained of a lack of willingness in government officials to recruit non-Muslims to higher positions.

The Meghwar community, however, said that in recent years a number of people from their community have joined the civil services in Sindh.

## **C. Possibilities for Non-Muslims Doing a Business**

Sikhs, Parsees and Upper Caste Hindus mostly prefer running a business while Christians and Scheduled Caste said that they could not start a business, especially food-related. Ahmadis and Baha'is had a mixed response.

Christian Study Centre Executive Director Jennifer Jag Jivan says that apart from the attached stigma, Christians lacked entrepreneurial ambition and skills, resources and social capital. She also cited that in some instances, Christians closed their businesses after their identity was disclosed.

In the case of Ahmadis, their religion matters in running a business. For example, Shezan beverages manufacturers have been attacked and their products boycotted because the owners are Ahmadis.

Parsees own Avari, one of the most successful hotel chains in Pakistan. They also have the largest share in the liquor brewery industry.

Upper Caste Hindus in Sindh have a remarkable share in industries related to cotton production, pulses and liquor sale. Many restaurants, like Rajdhani Delight, offering non-vegetarian food, are owned by Upper Caste Hindus. Traditional Rajasthani handicraft is produced by Upper Caste Hindus and Scheduled Caste Meghwars (Kararh). In Sukkur, the business of dates is also owned by the Upper Caste Hindus. However, in many instances, Hindu respondents informed that they used Muslims as a “face” of their business or they gave neutral names to their businesses like the *Baloch Karyana Store* in Balochistan.

## D. Employment Refused on Account of Faith

Senator Kamran Michael said that instances of being denied a job due to a person's faith are quite possible in the private sector.

Former Lahore District Council member Rafaquat Sahotra said that “Christian youngsters in our neighbourhood were expelled from their jobs after co-workers came to know about their religion”.

Respondents from Sindh said that this used to be an issue in the past but the situation has improved now.

Respondents in general said that the 5 per cent minority job quota is filled with sanitation jobs, which often mentions that “only non-Muslims” are required as sanitation workers. However, the minority job quota is necessary because of this reason as well. At the same time, social capital also matters in securing a job.

## E. Bonded Labour and Religious Minorities

Pakistan stands on the eighth number with 3.1 million in bonded labour on the Global Slavery Index.<sup>147</sup> These bonded labourers are mostly non-Muslim. Scheduled Caste Hindus work as bonded labourers in the fields in the interior Sindh and South Punjab.<sup>148</sup> The number of the Meghwar community has decreased in agricultural bonded-labour but the situation is the same for the Kohli and Bheel communities, Satram Sangi informed.

Most brick kiln workers in Punjab are Christian who face double abuse. These workers have no fixed duty hours. They are stuck in this situation because of the *Peshgi* system (advance payment) that restricts their freedom till the repayment of the debt. Following is from Human Rights Watch:

*While all bonded laborers are victims of a consistent pattern of abuse, a Christian lawyer in Lahore, who wished to remain unidentified for fear of reprisal, stated, "Christian bonded laborers suffer double exploitation as religious minorities and as bonded laborers." Human Rights Watch/Asia found it difficult to document particular abuses against non-Muslim bonded laborers. However, eight Christians and three Hindus interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Asia stated that they were forced to work harder and were punished more brutally than Muslim bonded laborers. Asif Ali, a landlord from Sindh told Human Rights Watch/Asia that "the Kohlis and Bheels [low-caste Hindus] were kaffirs [infidels] and did not deserve any rights."<sup>149</sup>*

147. The Mindereroo Foundation, “Country Data: Pakistan,” Index Website, Global Slavery Index, 2018, <https://www.globallslaveryindex.org/2018/data/country-data/pakistan/>.

148. Asif Aqeel, “Dewa Rams Had Enough of It, Wont Let Landlords Abuse Him and His Family Anymore,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, October 7, 2017, <https://daillytimes.com.pk/113549/dewa-rams-had-enough-of-it-wont-let-landlords-abuse-him-and-his-family-anymore/>.

149. Human Rights Watch/Asia, “Contemporary Forms of Slavery in Pakistan,” Organizations Website, Human Rights Watch, July 1995, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Pakistan.htm>.

## F. Forcing a Non-Muslim to a Harder and Dirtier Work

This, again, is mainly from the perception of minorities. The study “Shame and Stigma in Sanitation” identifies that Christians are forced into going down the manhole naked.<sup>150</sup> Their supervisor is always a Muslim. Christians are never promoted to the level of supervisors.

Ahmadi respondents said that they were given harder work so they quit the job. Baha'is, Parsees, Upper Caste Hindus and Sikhs said that they were not facing any such situation.

## G. Promotion Made Difficult

Some religious minority representatives said that obtaining a job, especially a government job, is difficult. Promotion to the next level is also unlikely, in their opinion.

## H. Appointment of Non-Muslims on High Positions

In the past, there have been non-Muslims in senior positions in government and public offices. Cecil Edward Gibbon (National Assembly Deputy Speaker), Jamsheed Marker, a Parsee (diplomat and Ambassador to the US), AR Cornelius (Chief Justice of Pakistan), Dorab Framrose Patel, a Parsee, (Chief Justice Lahore High Court and Justice Supreme Court), Rana Bhagwandas (Acting Chief Justice of Pakistan) are some important examples.

Ahmadis face a different situation in such appointments.

In September 2018, Prime Minister Imran Khan-led Economic Advisory Council (EAC) appointed Princeton University's Economist Atif R. Mian but the government later had to ask him to step down because of severe public backlash over his Ahmadi faith.

Interestingly, the public response was much warmer when Kamran Michael was made the Punjab finance minister in 2006. “Yes, there was some negative reaction but I had sufficient support. This was a time when famous cricketer Yousuf Youhana had converted to Islam,” he said.

## I. Job Quota for Religious Minorities

There is clear evidence that the minority job quota has been ignored for a decade now.<sup>151</sup> The data on non-Muslim employees, particularly in Punjab, verifies that their representation is higher in the lowest level sanitation jobs while they stand nowhere in higher grade jobs.

## J. Economic Prosperity and Social Response

Respondents believe that economic prosperity makes relations strenuous with their Muslim neighbours and friends. They get suspicious, threatened, fearful or jealous.

The hardest responses came from Ahmadis, who said that their excellence and prosperity could mean removal from their jobs. They said that their products were boycotted and a factory owned by them was even set on fire in Jhelum.

In the case of Christians, if they prosper, they move to other areas so that there is no reprisal.

Senator Kamran Michael said that he faced this attitude when he got more recognition in his party.

150. Asif Aqeel and Mary Gill, “Shame and Stigma in Sanitation: Competing Faiths and Compromised Dignity, Safety and Employment Security of Sanitation Workers in Pakistan,” Research Report (Lahore: Center for Law and Justice, December 2019), <http://www.clj.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Shame-and-Stigma-in-Sanitation.pdf>.

151. Muhammad Irfan, “A Sorry State of Affairs: Despite 5% Quota, Minorities Remain out of Public Service,” News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, May 20, 2014, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/710509/a-sorry-state-of-affairs-despite-5-quota-minorities-remain-out-of-public-service/>.

Rafaqat Sahotra, ex-member of Lahore District Council, said that “our prosperity strikes a fear that minorities may become equal to them”.

Kidnapping of Hindus is associated with their prosperity in Karachi and Quetta.

Christian Study Centre Executive Director Jennifer Jag Jivan said that “many prosper but only rarely someone is attacked”.

Kinnaird College lecturer Ayra Indrias shared another side of the picture. She said that her “experiences have been very positive. It is more likely the community itself that will exhibit jealousy”.

## 7. Racism, Caste-Stigmas and Stereotyping of Religious Minorities

This section identifies any patterns that identify and segregate a member of a minority community.

### A. Stigmatised Identity

Various minorities groups have derogatory terms associated with their identity. For example, the Upper Caste Hindus are sometimes called Bania, (also pronounced Baniya/Vaniya: meaning a moneylender or a loan shark) a term which they reject.

Some people from lower caste Hindus also dislike being called a Scheduled Caste (but this report uses the term, given its use in the constitution of Pakistan as well as lack of offense by some other members of the group).

Ahmadis say that they dislike being called a “Qadiani” or “Mirzai,” since it is believed that these are hateful terms. Sikhs say that they, although rarely, are also called “Sikhrha”, which is a deriding term. The term used “Kararh”, used for the Meghwar, is also considered derogative. Sometimes they are also called “Dhed”, which means “carrion-eaters”. It is translated as “Halal Khor” (حلال خور) in Urdu and associated with the Scheduled Castes.

### B. Caste-Based Disabilities

The caste system is unique to the Indian subcontinent. Sociologically, it is defined as “a group that interacts economically with people outside it (through specialised economic roles), but segregates itself socially through endogamy (which prevents people from marrying outsiders).”<sup>152</sup> Sociologist Ian Robertson defines caste as a “closed form of social stratification in which status is determined by birth and is lifelong”<sup>153</sup> while Britannica defines castes as “socially ranked occupational categories”. We can think that it is a system that “determines whom one can marry and what privileges and roles one has in society.”<sup>154</sup>

The Portuguese who arrived in India in the sixteenth century called this occupational endogamy as *casta*, meaning “race, lineage.”<sup>155</sup> From '*casta*' the English language word 'caste' is derived, which has been prevalent for over a millennia in the subcontinent.

#### *i. Caste-based name-calling*

Christians are the only religious minority who suffer rampant caste-based name-calling of “Chuhra” (sweeper). It is a highly pejorative term comparable with N-word. The Christians from Peshawar

152. David Reich, *Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past* (New York: Pantheon, 2018), 141.

153. Ian Robertson, *Sociology*, 1st ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 1977), 217.

154. Reich, *Who We Are and How We Got Here*, 140.

155. Merriam-Webster.com, “Definition of CASTE,” in Merriam-Webster, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/caste>.

said that in Pashto they are called “Chuwana” while in Quetta, Karachi and Hyderabad they are called “Bhangi” – synonymous terms with the word Chuhra.

Baha'is, Hindus, Ahmadis, Sikh and Parsees said that they did not face caste-based name calling, though some Scheduled Caste Hindus said there were few such words but the trend was dying.

### *ii. Associating with degrading occupation with faith*

Parsees, Ahmadis, Upper Caste Hindus, Sikhs and Baha'is unanimously said that no menial or degrading occupation is associated with them. Most of the Scheduled Caste Hindus said that they were associated with menial works like “cobbling” or “sanitation”. But Christians unanimously agreed that they were associated with sanitation jobs. Hence, writing “non-Muslim” in government employment advertisements particularly for sanitation jobs means “Christians” and “Scheduled Castes” and not other minorities.

Pakistan Meghwar Council President Arjun Das describes it more precisely: “The Balmiki (Bhangi/Chuhra) caste is expected to work as sanitation labourers.”

### *iii. Dark in colour: racial profiling of minorities*

Parsee respondents said that generally it is believed that they are fair in colour. Baha'is were the only people who said that no certain facial features or skin colour is associated with them. Christians said that “dark colour”, uncouth look and weak physique were associated with them and they were stereotyped as ugly-looking, especially in the lower stratum of the Pakistani society.

Senator Kamran Michael said that in 2008, PPP Chairman Asif Ali Zardari had a meeting with parliamentarians. “Just by looking at a few Christian parliamentarians he said, 'So, we have minority representatives here too'.”

Full Gospel Assemblies Bible College Principal Liaqat Qaiser said, “If a Muslim is dark in colour, he is told that he looks like a Christian. If a Christian is fair in colour, he is told that he does not look like a Christian.”

The Upper Caste Hindus said that it is believed that Hindus are “smart and good looking” while scheduled castes Hindus said that they were identified as “dark in colour”.

Ahmadis said that the French-style beard is associated with them.

### *iv. And you stink too!*

Only one Sikh said that someone complained that persons of their community had a bad body odour while all other Sikhs negated it. All the Parsees and Upper Caste Hindus said that there was no such thing associated with them.

Amarnath Randhawa, a Scheduled Caste Hindu from Lahore, said that it was believed that only a “Muslim” does not stink.

The highest number of this came from the Christians who said that foul odour was associated with them.

## C. Untouchability

### *i. Refusal to eat/drink in the same crockery because of low caste origin*

Social interaction may involve eating and drinking together. Most of the Scheduled Caste Hindus and Christians complained that people have sometimes refused to eat or drink in the crockery used by them. It is particularly common in rural settings but not absent in urban areas.

Ahmadis and some Upper Caste Hindus said they had experienced this situation, however, Parsees and Baha'is said they had not faced any such stigma.

Senator Kamran Michael narrated a similar incident in which a Muslim woman refused to buy fruit touched by a Christian lady councillor in Lahore.

Food cooked by a Christian is sometimes disliked by Muslims and even by people of other minorities. However, Parsees do not have this issue. Hindus, both Scheduled Caste and Upper Caste, reported that there can be an issue, especially with meat. Sikhs on the other hand said that they organised *Iftaris* during the month of Ramadan which is warmly received by Muslims.

### *ii. Will a barber refuse you a haircut?*

Parsees, Upper Caste Hindus, Sikhs (though haircut is prohibited for Sikhs who adhere to the 5Ks commandment) and Baha'is said they have never been refused a haircut on account of their religion. Scheduled caste Hindus said there have been instances in the past when barbers used to call them out for entering their shops. Christians in remote areas like Kasur, Sheikhpura and in South Punjab still face such issues.

### *iii. Refuse a seat in the bus*

It was generally agreed that minorities are not refused a seat in public transportation. Some individual from the Scheduled Caste Hindus reported that their women were treated somewhat differently in public transportation since they could be easily identified from their appearance, which included wearing their traditional clothes (which they do very often).

## D. Stigma of Foreign Agents

### *i. Untrustworthy/traitors: Associating with a foreign country (considered enemy)*

Baha'is and Parsees are the only communities that are not associated with any foreign country. Upper Caste Hindus are usually associated with India. Historically, the scheduled caste Hindus have had no role in the government or any policy making in India. They have rather been the most depressed classes, however, they are also associated with India. Hindus are even further associated with RAW, India's external intelligence agency, which is very painful for them.

Christians are associated with the West in general, and particular with the US. Ahmadis said that they were associated with the UK.

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156. The Institute, "Long behind Schedule: A Study on the Plight of Scheduled Caste Hindus in Pakistan" (Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 2007),

## ii. Food taboos

### 1. Eat not Halal food

Many Pakistani Hindus are vegetarians while some are non-vegetarians but avoid beef. Some of the Scheduled Castes, for example in Bahawalpur, may eat Indian spiny-tailed lizards (ســانڈھا) and wild bores. Some Sikhs eat jhatka meat which “is the meat from an animal killed instantaneously, such as by a single strike of a sword or axe to sever the head”,<sup>157</sup> as compared to *zabiha* (ذبيحه) or a Muslim way of slaughtering an animal.

### 2. Liquor and social labelling of non-Muslims

In Pakistan, liquor is only allowed for non-Muslims. Article 37(h) of the Constitution states that “*The State shall prevent the consumption of alcoholic liquor otherwise (sic) than for medicinal and, in the case of non-Muslims, religious purposes*”.

In Sindh, no permit is required for acquiring a bottle of liquor from a wine shop (no brewery produces wine in the first place in Sindh though hence only spirits and beer are being sold). In Punjab, one can be jailed over a bottle of liquor.

Christians said that them being associated with liquor brings a bad repute to their community within the Pakistani society.<sup>158</sup>

Many of the respondents said that liquor was consumed in larger quantity by Muslims as compared to non-Muslims and their name is only used as an excuse to allow for the alcohol consumption.

In December 2018, Member of National Assembly Ramesh Kumar Vankwani tabled a bill that association of liquor with minorities for “religious purposes” should be amended. However, Muslim parliamentarians rejected the bill.<sup>159</sup>

Ahmadis, Baha'is and Parsees said that they were not associated with liquor.

## 8. Political Participation and Challenged Citizenship

For about three decades, the mode of political participation of religious minorities remained the separate electorate system in which they voted their coreligionists. It changed in 2002, but still their mainstreaming remains a challenge. This section along with political participation, looks into other aspects of citizenship.

### A. Challenged Citizenship

#### i. Can become president or president of Pakistan

Since 1956, the Constitution of Pakistan bars a non-Muslim from becoming the head of the state. In 2010, the 18th Constitutional Amendment declared that a non-Muslim could not become a premier of the country. Although this is almost impossible for any non-Muslim to become a prime minister or a president of Pakistan due to their extremely small number, the minority communities unanimously shared their sense of being a second class citizen. PEW Research Centre notes that there are 30 countries where the head of the state “must belong to a certain religion”.<sup>160</sup> So, Pakistan is no different, however, premiership is a different here.

157. Staff Writer, “Whats the Difference between Halal and Jhatka?,” Culinary Information Website, Times of India: Recipes, September 11, 2017, <https://recipes.timesofindia.com/articles/features/whats-the-difference-between-halal-and-jhatka/photostory/60462865.cms>.

158. Adeel Daniel, “Liquor Permit: A Filthy Piece of Paper,” News Agency's Blog Site, Dunya Blog (blog), January 7, 2020, <http://blogs.dunyanews.tv/25967/>.

159. Hasan Aftab Saeed, “Alcohol for Non-Muslims,” News, Feature and Opinion, Pakistan Today, December 17, 2018, <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/12/17/alcohol-for-non-muslims/>.

160. Angelina E Theodorou, “In 30 Countries, Heads of State Must Belong to a Certain Religion,” Research Organizations Blog Site, Pew Research Center (blog), July 22, 2014, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/22/in-30-countries-heads-of-state-must-belong-to-a-certain-religion/>.

## *ii. NADRA ID Card and religious minorities*

All religious minorities except Christians and the Scheduled Caste Hindus said that 100 per cent of members of their communities have National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA) identity cards.

In some cases, the required chain of documents (birth certificate and parents' identity cards) is not available. Rawadari Tehreek Chairman Samson Salamat said that “the birth certificate issued by the church is not an acceptable evidence to NADRA and this creates a problem.” Minority women are affected more by this predicament.

## *iii. Census results*

Despite the fact that the results of the last census were announced in 2018, the data of religious minorities is yet to be officially declared. Parsees and Baha'is believe that the census data is correct but others showed distrust in the results. Christians particularly demanded a clearer mechanism for collection of their data as it has a direct bearing on their representation in parliament as well as in other political and social aspects.

## *iv. Family laws of religious minorities*

The government passed the Hindu Marriage Bill in 2017 but rules of business have yet to be passed in Punjab and KP. Parsees have the Marriage and Divorce Act 1936 and they have no desire to update it. Christians have Divorce Act 1869 and Marriage Act 1872 which have almost never been amended since coming into force. The Punjab Assembly passed the Sikh Anand Karaj Marriage Act 2018 but no rules of business have been made. Baha'is also desire to have their personal laws but so far, no development has been made on this front.

## **B. Political Participation**

As the Constitution of Pakistan divides people on the basis of religion, so do political parties. There is a minority wing in almost all major political parties, which is sometimes abhorred by minorities because it is a sign of exclusion. “Handpicked non-Muslim” parliamentarians on reserved seats are said to be lacking “the credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the minority communities”.<sup>161</sup>

Non-Muslim parliamentarians come on seats reserved for them. Since 1947, very few religious minorities have been elected on general seats. In 1975, six reserved seats were added to the National Assembly. In 1985, Gen Zia-ul-Haq separated elections for religious minorities and in 2002, Gen Pervez Musharraf restored the joint electorate system, except for Ahmadis.

The following table prepared by Zafarullah Khan and Danyal Kamal from their report “Equality of Citizenship in Pakistan” shows that political participation of minorities has decreased over time.

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161. M Shahid Jatoi, “Unfinished Agenda for Minorities,” News, Feature and Opinion, Daily Times, April 29, 2018, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/233998/unfinished-agenda-for-minorities/>.

| Year | Non-Muslims in the National Assembly | Total Seats | Reserved Seats (Minorities) | General Election | Party List System | Reserved Seats (Women) |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1947 | 15                                   | 69          | 0                           | 15               | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1955 | 11                                   | 72          | 0                           | 11               | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1962 | 0                                    | 156         | 0                           | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1965 | 0                                    | 156         | 0                           | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1970 | 2                                    | 313         | 0                           | 2                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1985 | 10                                   | 237         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1988 | 10                                   | 237         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1990 | 10                                   | 217         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1993 | 10                                   | 217         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 1997 | 10                                   | 217         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 2002 | 10                                   | 342         | 10                          | 0                | 0                 | 0                      |
| 2008 | 11                                   | 341         | 10                          | 0                | 10                | 1                      |
| 2013 | 12                                   | 340         | 10                          | 0                | 10                | 2                      |

The situation changed in the 2018 general elections.

Three Upper Caste Hindus were elected on general seats – Hari Ram Kishori Lal won a Sindh Assembly seat from Mirpur Khas while Dr Mahesh Kumar Malani secured a National Assembly seat from Tharparkar, making him probably the first non-Muslim to be 'elected' to the National Assembly by winning a general seat since 1970. All three parliamentarians were elected from the PPP platform.

#### *i. Persons on reserved seats*

Following are the seats in the provincial assembly for non-Muslim under Article 106 of Constitution of Pakistan:

| Assembly           | General seats | Women | Non-Muslims | Total |
|--------------------|---------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Balochistan        | 51            | 11    | 3           | 65    |
| Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | 115           | 26    | 4           | 145   |
| Punjab             | 297           | 66    | 8           | 371   |
| Sindh              | 130           | 29    | 9           | 168   |

Article 51 of Constitution provides 10 seats for minorities in the National Assembly. In the Senate, there are 104 seats out of which four are for non-Muslims. These additional seats are filled through “proportional representation system” in which the members are selected by the political parties' on the basis of total number of general seats secured by each political party”.

Hence, the non-Muslims who come without direct vote, are considered “handpicked” and a “rubber stamp”.

### *ii. Can vote or contest on general seats?*

All religious minorities can contest and vote on general seats, except for Ahmadis under the Conduct of General Election Order 2002.<sup>162</sup>

### *iii. Will a Muslim vote for a non-Muslim?*

Christians said that Muslims will never vote for a Christian in Punjab. Although some Christians like Naila J. Diyal, Ben Hur Yousuf, Joseph Francis and others contested elections on general seats, the fact is that even members of their own community members did not vote for them. But situation for Hindus, especially Upper Caste Hindus, in Sindh is different.

According to Arjun Das, rich Upper Caste Hindus used to visit them for seeking votes when the separate electorate system was in place but the situation changed after its abolition.

## **9. Media and Minorities**

All minorities reported that they did not have a “sufficient” number of their community members in the mainstream print and electronic media. The only prominent name is Cyril Almeida, a Goan Christian from Karachi, who is associated with the English newspaper Dawn and was responsible for the “Dawn leaks”. Following the leaks, he was accused of being pro-Indian and his faith was constantly targeted on Twitter and other social media platforms.

Recently, Manmeet Kaur, a Sikh woman from Peshawar, became famous for being the “first Sikh” TV news reporter. Zarnak Sidhwa, a Parsee woman, has become famous for hosting a cooking show.

All the minorities also reported that they did not get sufficient coverage in the media. They were only covered when there was some incident and that they were not a priority. Some large communities such as Christians and Hindus received coverage only when they celebrated their well-known religious festivals or ceremonies. But Parsees and Baha'is also said that they were not interested in media coverage.

### **A. Social media and minorities**

Parsees and Baha'is said that they never faced any social media bashing. Christians said that they do but it was not very common. For Hindus, it was more but they said that it was linked with India and Pakistan's relations with it.

Pakistan Meghwar Council's President Arjun Das said, “It is rare and the Pakistan Government should always keep a check on this.” One feature is ridiculing Hindu deities. Christians also referred to a recent drama “Baji Irshad” in which Christian are negatively portrayed.

## **10. Migration and Minorities**

Although a large number of Pakistanis have migrated to western countries, the number of non-Muslims has steadily decreased in Pakistan. Brain drain among religious minorities is also vividly evident:

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162. President of Pakistan, “The Conduct Of General Elections Order, 2002.”

## **A. Internal and External Migration of Minorities**

Migration is a general phenomenon. More than 90 per cent of Pakistan's population was living in rural areas in 1947. Now the rural population has decreased to 60 per cent. Similarly, a large number of Pakistanis migrated to western countries while several others took up employment in Middle Eastern countries.

## **B. Migration from Villages to Cities**

Christians and Hindus have migrated in large numbers from villages to cities in search of better educational and economic opportunities since 1947. Also, in villages they were under the control of the local landlords while in cities they were comparatively more independent and isolated, especially in neighbourhood specific to them. To some extent, this gave them a chance to adopt a more respectable caste identity, especially in the case of Scheduled Caste Hindus. Parsees were not living in villages and the same situation is of Christians in Quetta because they had migrated from Punjab. In recent years, Sikhs have also migrated from KP to Nankana Sahib.

## **C. Economic Migrants or Refugees/Asylum Seekers**

Overall, Pakistan is the 6th largest country producing asylum in industrialized countries.<sup>163</sup> So, there are many non-Muslims who are seeking asylum but probably there are no Pakistani Parsees who are seeking asylum. Rather they are economic migrants. Christians and Ahmadis on the other hand constitute the bulk of asylum applications filed with UNHCR in Thailand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. Most Ahmadis have migrated to the UK, Canada and Germany. There has also been a general trend of Hindus and Sikhs going to India for asylum. Scheduled Caste Hindus said that only Upper Caste Hindus were migrating as they had relatives in India.

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163. Ismail Sheikh and Reuters, "Highest Number of Asylum Applications Submitted from Pakistan in 2014: Report," News, Feature and Opinion, The Express Tribune, March 26, 2015, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/859473/highest-number-of-asylum-applications-submitted-from-pakistan-in-2014-report/>.



**A priest is performing a mass in the Cathedral of the Holy Redeemer in Lahore**

# CHAPTER NINE

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This report strongly emphasises that the Supreme Court's June 19, 2014 judgment should be implemented in letter and spirit. It will help resolve most of the issues of religious minorities today. Under the current political arrangement, Minority Affairs are domain of the Federal Religious Affairs Ministry but it has no minorities to represent them.

Following are recommendations based on the discussion with policymakers:

### **1. Minority neighbourhoods, educational and medical institutions, graveyards/cremation grounds and worship places**

#### **a. Minority neighbourhoods**

- i. Minorities, specifically Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus, live in neighbourhoods over which they have no land rights. These illegal settlements have been more susceptible to violence against youths, mob violence and violence for evacuation. These settlements need to be regularised on an urgent basis.
- .ii. The government needs to preferential implement development (especially infrastructure) project in minority neighbourhoods that lack even basic amenities due to a history of negligence or owned by a landlord (in rural settings). These shanty towns are spread across the country.

#### **b. Minorities' graveyards and cremation grounds:**

- i. Special budgetary allocations should be made for improving the conditions of existing graveyards and cremation grounds of minorities.
- ii. Establish model graveyards/cremation grounds for minorities wherever they are under pressure from surrounding neighbourhoods.

#### **c. Minority educational institutions:**

The missionary educational institutions that are still under the control of the government should be denationalised.

### **2. Violence, Terrorism and Law Enforcement Agencies**

#### **a. Violence against religious minorities:**

- i. The number of attacks on minority neighbourhoods has decreased. However, there is a need to bring some legal reforms in the criminal law to discourage incidents of mob violence. For this purpose, the Punjab Security of Vulnerable Establishments 2015 should identify minority neighbourhoods also as vulnerable places.
- ii. The ban on mosque loudspeakers needs to be enforced in rural areas, especially those close to minority neighbourhoods.

## **b. Improving attitude of law enforcement agencies towards religious minorities:**

- i. A special module be introduced in the curriculum of law enforcement agencies to sensitise them towards religious minorities.
- ii. Awareness workshops with law enforcement agencies should be held to increase their awareness about religious diversity in Pakistan.

## **3. Minority women: Harassment, Force Marriage and Forced Conversion**

When a case is filed of forced conversion, the court should involve a reliable non-government organisation or an individual from the concerned community as *amicus curiae* to distinguish between a forced marriage or if it was contracted out of free will. Also, age of the girl must be treated under the Child Marriage Restraint Act, rather than the religious principle of puberty.

## **4. Freedom of Religion or Belief**

### **a. Non-Muslims in textbooks:**

1. Recognition of heroes of religious minorities is done to a very limited extent in some textbooks. However, there is a need to extend it to all relevant textbooks to promote a sense of inclusion.
2. Religious minorities should be made part of the national curriculum framework and teachers' training programs so that their inputs are taken into account.
3. Textbooks must promote inclusive worldview where religious minorities are portrayed as part of the social and public life in line with the suggestions submitted to the Supreme Court of Pakistan in December 2015.<sup>164</sup>
4. The struggle of minorities in the making of Pakistan should be made part of textbooks, media and state sponsored public programs so that they are projected as equal well-wishers of Pakistan.
5. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech should be made part of the school textbooks.

### **b. Islamic Studies for non-Muslims:**

An acceptable, inclusive and more viable alternative of Islamic Studies should be introduced for the minority students.

## **5. Anti-Blasphemy Laws and Religious Minorities:**

- a. The general public should be made aware that religious minorities have a sense of insecurity due to misuse of anti-blasphemy laws. Not everyone in religious minorities intends to injure religious feelings of Muslims.
- b. Introduce procedural amendments that further decrease the misuse of these laws.

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164. Asif Aqeel and World Watch Monitor staff, "Landmark Judgment on Pakistani Religious Minorities yet to Be Honoured by the State," News & Reporting, World Watch Monitor (blog), May 14, 2018, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/05/landmark-judgment-on-pakistani-religious-minorities-yet-to-be-honoured-by-the-state/>.

## **6. Economic Prosperity of Religious Minorities**

### **a. Educational level and economic prosperity:**

There is an urgent need to introduce the education quota for minority students to deal with the sense of deprivations, especially for those communities that said that they did not have an adequate number of educated people. This also has a direct bearing on the implementation of minority job quota for government services by ensuring an adequate supply of qualified candidates.

### **b. Recruitment in civil services:**

Minorities should be given a sufficient number of positions of power in the government and Foreign Service.

### **c. Encouraging non-muslims engage in business activities:**

Government initiatives of government to promote socioeconomic development and entrepreneurship should allocate a quota for religious minority youths, especially those who find it hard to start a business.

### **d. Job refused on account of faith:**

The process of recruitment on jobs, both in private and public sector, should be made more transparent so candidates can assure themselves of meritocracy. Also, the officers involved in the recruitment process should be sensitised on the marginalization of religious minorities as well as taught the importance of ensuring that they are not being biased towards minority groups.

### **e. Bonded labour and religious minorities:**

i. There is a tendency to hire minorities, particularly Christians and Scheduled Caste Hindus, in sanitation work. Government recruitment policies that require only non-Muslims to work as janitors should be discarded effectively. Any attempt to impose these policies should be dealt with strictly.

ii. Bonded labour needs to be discouraged through effective implementation of laws like The Punjab Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act 1992.

### **f. Promotion made difficult:**

Promotion policies of non-Muslims in government jobs should be reviewed, especially to ensure that their promotion is not obstructed because of their religion.

### **g. Appointment of non-muslims in high positions:**

The government needs to collect data on religious minorities in government jobs to find out if their percentage is lower in higher positions as compared to their proportion in the population. The identified gaps should be removed through the effective implementation of the job quota as well as other possible interventions.

## 7. Racism, Caste-Stigmas and Stereotyping of Religious Minorities

### a. Caste-based disabilities and untouchability practices

- i. There should be a legislative measure to penalise caste-based discrimination and stereotyping/racial profiling, in public and private spheres (i.e. name calling, considering occupation like sanitation only for minorities, associating dark colour with minorities), against vulnerable minority communities.

### b. Food taboos

- i. Do not eat halal food: Diversity of religions be appreciated, including their differences.
- ii. Liquor and social labelling of non-Muslims: There is a need to disassociate liquor from religious minorities, especially under the excuse of their faiths.

## 8. Political Participation and Citizenship

### a. Citizenship:

A special awareness program should be initiated to encourage non-Muslim citizens to register with National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and flexibility in documentation/requirements should be made as and where possible. For example, a birth certificate of a church should be acceptable.

### b. Census results:

Census results of 2017 on religious minorities should be released with explanations as the data in unofficial reports is not accurate and consistent. When conducting the census, especially in minority neighbourhoods, the local leaders should accompany the census personnel to assist in improving the precision of the census.

### c. Political participation:

- i. The representation of religious minorities needs to be increase in public office, especially their seats in various legislatures should also be increased.
- ii. In accordance with Election Act 2017, political parties need to allocate a certain percentage of tickets of general seats to candidates from religious minorities.

## 9. Pilgrimage and Migration

### a. Can freely visit their religious places abroad:

All minorities should be allowed and facilitated to travel to their places of pilgrimage.

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