



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2023

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION: SENIOR ADVOCATE OF SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN ARRESTED ON BASELESS BLASPHEMY CHARGES

Karachi, Pakistan April 27, 2023: In a shocking turn of events, Syed Ali Ahmad Tariq, a 77-year-old senior advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, was attacked and beaten up along with his junior lawyer by the opponents while appearing in Karachi City Court¹ earlier today. The attackers then took him forcibly to the police station. Instead of providing him with the necessary aid and protection, the police registered² a blasphemy case against him under section 298-B of Pakistan Penal Code and arrested him. The opponents argued that Syed Ali Ahmad Tariq's name contained "Syed", which they believed is a Muslim name and Ahmadis are not allowed by law to use Islamic names. However, there is no law that forbids Ahmadis from using Islamic names.

This is not the first time Mr. Tariq has been targeted for being an Ahmadi. Last year, the police registered³ a similar case against him under Section 298 B & C of PPC for having "Syed" in his name. It is noteworthy that both cases were registered against him for the same reason, in the same police station.

Syed Ali Ahmad Tariq has been representing countless Ahmadis in baseless anti-Ahmadi cases and has served as their counsel for the past 39 years since the promulgation of Ordinance XX.

The spokesperson of the Ahmadiyya Community Pakistan has condemned his arrest and stated that he was taken into custody on absurd charges in an attempt to impede his work on behalf of the Ahmadi community. The spokesperson also expressed concern that such actions could damage the country's reputation in the international community. Additionally, the spokesperson criticized the apparent mockery of the law in registering two cases against Syed Ali Ahmad Tariq under the same provisions and for the same type of charge at the same police station. He further said that such events were damaging the reputation of the beloved country and creating a perception that Pakistan is increasingly being influenced by religious extremists. The spokesperson called for the immediate dismissal of the baseless case against Syed Ali Ahmad Tariq, his release from custody, and for those responsible for attacking him to be held accountable under the law.

We respectfully call upon the international community to take a firm stance and raise their voices against any potential human rights violations in Pakistan. It is our sincere hope that all concerned parties will work together to ensure that the rights of all individuals, including Ahmadis, are protected and respected.

----- END -----

¹ He was appearing in court for a case involving the Ahmadiyya Hall Karachi, which was previously vandalized on February 02, 2023

² FIR Number 54/23 dated Apr 27, 2023 (Encl. with English Translation)

³ FIR Number 172/2022 dated Nov 21, 2022 (Encl.)